

**STUDIES IN THE TEXT AND STRUCTURE OF HOSEA 12-14**

**by**

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**I hereby declare that the work presented in this thesis is the result of my own research, and that it has been composed by myself.**

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## ABSTRACT OF THESIS

The first chapter of this thesis reviews the major literature on the book of Hosea since Ewald: found in commentaries, monographs, and special studies. Chapter two establishes that textual criticism of Hosea 12-14 is the basic necessity for the following structural analysis of Hos 12-14. This chapter begins by reviewing the major literature on the textual criticism of Hosea. This is followed by a detailed discussion of the MT/LXX of Hos 12-14. Finally, as a result of these analyses, my own translation of Hos 12-14 is presented.

Chapter three constitutes the core of this thesis. This chapter reviews the major literature on structural criticism of Hosea. The subsequent discussion argues for the literary unity of Hos 12-14 by noting the repetition of words, phrases, and lines in this section. The following structural analyses of Hos 12-14 identify three large constituent literary units 12:1-15; 13:1-14:1; 14:2-9, in which the following key words can be discerned: מרמה 'falsehood'; שוב (hiph) 'to return/repay'; מות 'to die'; אשם 'to become guilty'; ידע 'to know'; בקע 'to tear open'; שוב (qal) 'to (re)turn'; and אהב 'to love'. Chapter four is detailed exegetical studies on these key words. These are reviewed in the context of the book of Hosea as a whole, to understand their functions in Hos 12-14. Chapter five brings this thesis to a conclusion by summarising the discussions on the key words to comprehend the thematic unity of Hosea 12-14 - the relationship between Yahweh and Israel in Hos 12-14: the movement from his words of judgment (12:1-14:1) towards promises of her salvation (14:2-9). This is followed by concluding observations.



## INTRODUCTION

To seek to understand the structure of each of the books of the Bible is a basic task for anyone who wants to interpret its full meaning, since each is or may be a literary whole. Past scholarship has generally found it difficult to discern the structure of the book of Hosea, primarily because of the rather rapid changes in style, person, and subject matter, together with the peculiar language of Hosea. There are also few obvious devices which can be used to distinguish its structure.

In spite of these seemingly intractable difficulties in the identification of the structure of the book of Hosea, recently in their massive commentary on Hosea (Anchor Bible Series), Andersen and Freedman (1980) have concentrated mainly on structural analyses of the book. For these purposes, they have applied rhetorical criticism to the book in order to distinguish many devices such as word repetition, parallelism, chiasm, inclusion, and hence identified small and large constituent literary units in the book. For example, in order to identify the structure of Hos 1-3, Andersen and Freedman (1980:133-138) listed many repetition of words and ideas.

However, although I fully acknowledge their extensively detailed structural analyses of Hos 1-3; 4-11, they seem to have dealt with Hos 12-14 too briefly, given the previous two sections. They have discussed Hos 12-14 in 55 pages (pp. 593-648) among a total of 648 pages in their commentary. Perhaps their detailed analyses of Hos 1-11 may explain why they have dealt with Hos 12-14 so concisely: they may have thought that many words, phrases, and lines in Hos 12-14 have already been discussed in the earlier Hos

1-11. However, although Hos 12-14 is closely connected to Hos 1-11, it should immediately be noted that every word, phrase, and line has its own function in its own literary context. In this regard, they appear to have failed to discover many of the significant elements and messages which can be identified from Hos 12-14. In addition, a weakness in their commentary seems to be their neglect of the textual criticism of Hosea: their discussion is based on the MT as it stands. We must fully recognise the value and authority of the MT. However, at the same time, we have to note that every Hebrew text (including MT) and ancient version did suffer more or less corruption during the long history of its complex textual transmission. The Hebrew text of Hosea has in fact often been regarded as one of the most corrupt in the Old Testament. In this respect, their detailed discussion of the literary structure of Hosea should have been done on the basis of a correspondingly detailed textual criticism of Hosea. Their commentary on Hosea could then have been regarded as a much better work.

Following this observation, it is the purpose of this thesis to analyse the structure of the final form of Hos 12-14 by the employment of rhetorical criticism, but in full awareness of textual criticism, and to study the meaning of Hos 12-14. The present thesis has been concerned with detailed studies of Hos 12-14 for the following two reasons: in the first place, recently a majority of scholars<sup>1</sup> has thought that there is a major break between Hos 4-11 and 12-14. The other reason is that so far as I have been

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<sup>1</sup> See, for example, Wolff (1974:xxix); Soggin (1976:251); Jeremias (1983:148-149); Emmerson (1984:9-10); Neef (1987:19); Yee (1987:51); Hubbard (1989:49-50); cf. Buss (1969:23); Mays (1969:15-16); Childs (1979:383); Deissler (1981:10).



aware, an extensive structural analysis of Hos 12-14 based on its textual criticism has not to date appeared. We suggest, for the structural studies in this thesis, the following hierarchical terminology, in decreasing size of its literary units<sup>2</sup>: book - part - section - sub-section - unit<sup>3</sup> - verse.

From these structural analyses of Hos 12-14, I will identify three large constituent literary sub-sections in the section of Hos 12-14: 12:1-15; 13:1-14:1; 14:2-9, and will discern the key words in the section. The final aim of this thesis will then be a detailed exegetical study of the key terms in this section, in the context of the whole book of Hosea, in order to convey the unique message of the section: the relationship of Yahweh with Israel; her salvation through his judgment. In order to demonstrate the theme of this thesis, the contents of this work will proceed as follows:

In chapter one, I will begin my thesis by reviewing the major literature on Hosea since Ewald in order to shape the framework of the following discussion of this thesis. Chapter two will contain the review of the literature of the textual criticism of Hosea, which will argue for the need of a further thorough discussion of the MT/LXX of Hosea. For the comparative study of the MT/LXX of Hosea, the project of Kraft and Tov (1986) provides the starting point. As a result of these text critical analyses of Hos 12-14, in this thesis, new solutions to textually problematic passages will be suggested (for example, in 12:1; 13:2; 14:3). As a consequence and

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<sup>2</sup> Here the term 'unit' may refer to either book, or part, or section, or sub-section.

<sup>3</sup> Here the term 'unit' is used to refer to a coherent literary unit of two or more verses.



summary of these analyses, my own translation of Hos 12-14 will be offered.

Chapter three I regard as the kernel of this thesis. This chapter will begin with a discussion of the significance of structural criticism. This is followed by the review of the major literature on structural criticism on Hosea. In the following section 'the aim of rhetorical criticism', the major works of J. Muilenburg, one of pioneers of this principle, will be surveyed. From this review, I will deduce that the repetition of words, phrases, and lines are a primary rhetorical device for identifying literary units within Hos 12-14. In the following section 'Structural Overview of Hos 12-14', I will identify three large literary sub-sections, namely 12:1-15; 13:1-14:1; 14:2-9. These sub-sections are linked by the repetition of words, phrases and lines, and consistency in their motifs. The following structural analyses of these sub-sections will uncover 1) that each of them is an integral unit; and 2) that Hos 12-14 has the following key words: מרמה 'falsehood', שוב (hiph) 'to return/repay', מות 'to die', אשם 'to become guilty', ידע 'to know', בקע 'to tear open', שוב (qal) 'to (re)turn', and אהב 'to love'.

Chapter four will be a detailed exegetical study of the key words in the context of the whole book of Hosea to suggest proper messages of Hos 12-14. The final chapter five will conclude this thesis by the summary of the previous discussion of the key words to convey the thematic unity of Hos 12-14. From this exegetical study, I will argue the double aspect of the relationship of Yahweh with Israel depicted in Hos 12-14: words of judgment (12:1-14:1) followed by promises of salvation (14:2-9). This is followed by concluding observations.

I hope this thesis will offer new insights into the interpretation of Hos 12-14, and will illustrate the proper employment of both textual criticism and structural criticism in a mix which could be extended to earlier parts and sections of Hosea, and to other books of the Old Testament.

Biblical quotations in English are in my own translation, unless otherwise indicated. Where verse numbers in the Hebrew and English texts differ, the former has been followed throughout, and the latter has been marked by brackets.

## ABBREVIATIONS

<b>AB</b>	<b>Anchor Bible</b>
<b>A/F</b>	<b>F.I.Andersen and D.N.Freedman, <i>Hosea</i>, 1980</b>
<b>AJSL</b>	<b><i>American Journal of Semitic Languages and Literature</i></b>
<b>ATD</b>	<b>Das Alte Testament Deutsch</b>
<b>AUSS</b>	<b><i>Andrews University Seminary Studies</i></b>
<b>BA</b>	<b><i>Biblical Archaeologist</i></b>
<b>BASOR</b>	<b><i>Bulletin of the American Schools of Oriental Research</i></b>
<b>BDB</b>	<b>F.Brown, S.R.Driver, and C.A.Briggs, <i>Hebrew and English Lexicon of the Old Testament</i>, 1906.</b>
<b>BHK</b>	<b>R.Kittel, <i>Biblia Hebraica</i> 3</b>
<b>BHS</b>	<b><i>Biblia Hebraica Stuttgartensia</i></b>
<b>Bib</b>	<b><i>Biblica</i></b>
<b>BibOr</b>	<b><i>Biblica et Orientalia</i></b>
<b>BKAT</b>	<b><i>Biblischer Kommentar: Altes Testament</i></b>
<b>BTB</b>	<b><i>Biblical Theology Bulletin</i></b>
<b>BZ</b>	<b><i>Biblische Zeitschrift</i></b>
<b>BZAW</b>	<b><i>Beihefte zur Zeitschrift für die alttestamentliche Wissenschaft</i>, Berlin: de Gruyter</b>
<b>CBQ</b>	<b><i>Catholic Biblical Quarterly</i></b>
<b>CBQMS</b>	<b>The CBQ Monograph Series</b>
<b>EJ</b>	<b><i>Encyclopedia Judaica</i></b>
<b>EvQ</b>	<b><i>Evangelical Quarterly</i></b>
<b>EvT</b>	<b><i>Evangelische Theologie</i></b>
<b>GKC</b>	<b><i>Gesenius' Hebrew Grammar</i>. Edited by E. Kautzsch, and revised by A. E. Cowley, 1910.</b>
<b>GSAT</b>	<b><i>Gesammelte Studien zum Alten Testament</i></b>
<b>HAT</b>	<b><i>Handbuch zum Alten Testament</i></b>
<b>HTR</b>	<b><i>Harvard Theological Review</i></b>
<b>HUCA</b>	<b><i>Hebrew Union College Annual</i></b>
<b>IB</b>	<b><i>Interpreter's Bible</i></b>
<b>ICC</b>	<b><i>International Critical Commentary</i></b>
<b>IDB</b>	<b>G.A.Buttrick, ed., <i>Interpreter's Dictionary of the Bible</i></b>
<b>IDBSup</b>	<b><i>IDB Supplementary Volume</i></b>
<b>Int</b>	<b><i>Interpretation</i></b>
<b>JBC</b>	<b>R.E.Brown et al., eds., <i>The Jerome Biblical Commentary</i></b>
<b>JBL</b>	<b><i>Journal of Biblical Literature</i></b>
<b>JJS</b>	<b><i>Journal of Jewish Studies</i></b>
<b>JNES</b>	<b><i>Journal of Near Eastern Studies</i></b>
<b>JNSL</b>	<b><i>Journal of Northwest Semitic Languages</i></b>
<b>JNSLSup</b>	<b><i>JNSL Supplementary Series</i></b>
<b>JSJ</b>	<b><i>Journal for the Study of Judaism in the Persian, Hellenistic and Roman Periods</i></b>
<b>JSOT</b>	<b><i>Journal for the Study of the Old Testament</i></b>
<b>JSOTSup</b>	<b><i>JSOT Supplement Series</i></b>



<b>JSS</b>	<b><i>Journal of Semitic Studies</i></b>
<b>JTS</b>	<b><i>Journal of Theological Studies</i></b>
<b>Jud</b>	<b><i>Judaism</i></b>
<b>KAT</b>	<b>E.Sellin, ed., Kommentar zum Alten Testament</b>
<b>KB</b>	<b>L.Koehler and W.Baumgartner, <i>Lexicon in Veteris Testamenti Libros</i>, 1953.</b>
<b>K/T</b>	<b>R.A.Kraft and E.Tov, <i>A Computerized Data Base for Septuagint Studies: The Parallel Aligned Text of the Greek and Hebrew Bible</i>, 1986.</b>
<b>McCQ</b>	<b><i>McCormick Quarterly</i></b>
<b>NICOT</b>	<b>New International Commentary on the Old Testament</b>
<b>NKZ</b>	<b><i>Neue kirchliche Zeitschrift</i></b>
<b>OTL</b>	<b>Old Testament Library</b>
<b>OTS</b>	<b><i>Oudtestamentische Studiën</i></b>
<b>OTWSA</b>	<b><i>Die Outestamentiese Werkgemeenskap in Suid-Afrika</i></b>
<b>PTMS</b>	<b>Pittsburgh Theological Monograph Series</b>
<b>RB</b>	<b><i>Revue biblique</i></b>
<b>ResQ</b>	<b><i>Restoration Quarterly</i></b>
<b>RevExp</b>	<b><i>Review and Expositor</i></b>
<b>SBLDS</b>	<b>Society of Biblical Literature Dissertation Series</b>
<b>SBLMS</b>	<b>SBL Monograph Series</b>
<b>SBLSP</b>	<b>SBL Seminar Papers</b>
<b>SEÅ</b>	<b><i>Svensk Exegetisk Årsbok</i></b>
<b>SJT</b>	<b><i>Scottish Journal of Theology</i></b>
<b>SWJT</b>	<b><i>South Western Journal of Theology</i></b>
<b>TBT</b>	<b><i>The Bible Today</i></b>
<b>TDOT</b>	<b><i>Theological Dictionary of the Old Testament</i></b>
<b>TLAT</b>	<b><i>Theologische Literaturzeitung zum Alten Testament</i></b>
<b>TLZ</b>	<b><i>Theologische Literaturzeitung</i></b>
<b>TSK</b>	<b><i>Theologische Studien und Kritiken</i></b>
<b>TWAT</b>	<b><i>Theologisches Wörterbuch zum Alten Testament</i></b>
<b>VT</b>	<b><i>Vetus Testamentum</i></b>
<b>VTSup</b>	<b><i>VT Supplements</i></b>
<b>ZAW</b>	<b><i>Zeitschrift für die alttestamentliche Wissenschaft</i></b>

## **I REVIEW OF THE INTERPRETATION OF THE BOOK OF HOSEA**

The Hebrew text of Hosea has generally been regarded as one of the most difficult texts in the Old Testament. For example, recently A/F (1980) remarked that 'the text of Hosea competes with Job for the distinction of containing more unintelligible passages than any other book of the Hebrew Bible'. Hence, the problems of text, philology, and literary style among others have continually invited translators and commentators to test a variety of possible methods in solving the problems of the book.

As a framework for the following discussion of this thesis, in this chapter, I will review the major literature on the book of Hosea since Ewald in chronological order; and for the purpose of the present study, I am more concerned with Hos 4-14, especially Hos 12-14 rather than Hos 1-3. The portions of the literature on textual criticism and structural criticism will be reviewed in chapters II and III, respectively. Finally, in the concluding observations of this review, an alternative method will be suggested for the interpretation of Hos 12-14.

### **I.1 Earlier Modern Interpretation of the Book of Hosea**

#### **I.1.1 G. H. Ewald (1875)**

From the late 19th century to the early 20th century, much attention has been given to the Minor Prophets. In the view of Ewald, Hosea worked in two different periods and conditions of the northern kingdom: chs 1-2 describe the rule of Jeroboam II, while chs 3-14 delineate the result of the



internal chaos after the death of Jeroboam.

Ewald (230) maintained that the book of Hosea as a whole, with its complete and artistic composition, came from Hosea himself; and the only exception is 1:1, which cannot be due to Hosea himself: 'the book as we have it was written upon a decided artistic plan, and has been preserved as a whole in its original form; there is only the present *heading*, which cannot have been from Hosea's hand'.

Although Ewald (218) argues for the internal unity of the book of Hosea, he also realizes the difficulty in the interpretation of the text of Hosea, which stems from the peculiarities of the spirit of Hosea: 'to his painfully agitated heart, foreseeing calamity, it is impossible to unfold his thoughts in calm long sentences, and to arrange his words in firm and strong order'.

#### 1.1.2 T. K. Cheyne (1884)

Ewald's strophic arrangement of the book of Hosea, especially chs 4-14 was criticized by Cheyne (33): 'the transitions of thought in Hosea are too abrupt to be brought into a scheme of such an artificial order. Symmetrical divisions ---are out of the question'. Hence, Cheyne (20) argued for emotional influence in order to divide the units of Hosea, which will be reviewed in the following chapter III.

Cheyne (19) was one of the first scholars who realized a problem in the relationship between Hosea's oracles and the present written text:

We cannot suppose that Hosea delivered any part of this 'book' in its present form; it can only be a reproduction by the prophet himself of the main points of his discourses, partly imaginative, partly on the basis of notes.

In his later study, Cheyne (1895: xvii-xviii) says that we can see many marks of later editing, which, according to him, give a misleading interpretation to Hosea's oracles:

In the book of Hosea we naturally *expect* to see numerous signs of later editing. The abruptness of style characteristic of chaps iv-xiv made it easy for editors to work in fresh passages, and the imperfect and probably often scarcely legible state in which the early records were transmitted may have made it sometimes necessary for them to piece together, and so inevitably to misrepresent, the scanty relics of Hosea.

Thus, in order to understand Hosea in a right way, Cheyne (xix) argues that we should omit the late additions, among which the clearest passages are 2:1-3[1:10-2:1]; 3:5 ('and David their king'); 8:14; 14:2-10[1-9]; hardly less clear passages are 1:7; 4:15a; 5:15-6:4; 6:11-7:1 (parts).

### L1.3 J. Wellhausen (1898)

Wellhausen's work on the Minor Prophets has been marked as one of the most important studies in the area of the Old Testament. For example, on the significance of the Wellhausen's work, Cheyne (1895:xi-xii) commented: 'no book of equal importance for the critical study of the prophets has been produced in Germany for many a long year'.

For Wellhausen, it was necessary to give special attention to textual criticism in order to provide the best possible textual basis. In this regard,

his notes on Hosea (96-134) are still providing rich information to solve many textual problems in Hosea by repairing the corrupted texts. This will be reviewed in the following chapter II. His well-known theory of the 'Documentary Hypothesis' is also reflected in the book of Hosea. For example, Wellhausen (128) noted that in Hos 12:4, Hosea attributed to his listeners or readers knowledge of the narratives of the J tradition.

As for the structure of the book of Hosea, Wellhausen divided the book into two parts: chs 1-3; 4-14. According to his literary analyses of the text of Hosea, he treated the following passages as additions: 1:1b ('in the days of Uzziah ---'), 7; 2:1-3[1:10-2:1], 18[16]; 7:4; 8:14; 9:9aß ('as in the days of Gibeah ---'); 10:14b; 11:8b-11; 12:4b-7, 13-14[3b-6, 12-13]; 14:2-10[1-9].

#### L1.4 D. K. Marti (1904)

During the early decades of the twentieth century, studies on the book of Hosea focused mainly on the extent and type of secondary material in the text.

As for the structure and composition of the book of Hosea, Marti (1-2) does not follow the traditional main division of Hos 1-3; 4-14. Rather he argues that these two parts should be seen as connected to each other for the following reasons:

- 1) Hos 1-3 does not indicate an earlier period than Hos 4-14.
- 2) Hos 3 does not belong to the original sequence of the book of Hosea. Hos 3 was inserted later in its present position by an editor: Hos 3 separated Hos



2 from Hos 4-14, to which it once originally belonged. So, Hos 3 is not suitable as marker of a division.

3) Eventually, in both form and content Hos 2 cannot be separated from Hos 4-14, since Hos 2 had much more in common with Hos 4-14 than Hos 1 and 3.

Therefore, according to Marti, the book should not be separated into Hos 1-3 and 4-14, but should be treated as a whole: Hos 1 serves as an introduction to Hosea's family life, and to the following chapters 2-12 of the collections of Hosea's sayings; and 13:1-14:1[13:16] forms the conclusion to the collection (He regards 14:2-10[1-9] as secondary).

In the view of Marti (8-10), the Judah references do not belong to the primary stratum of the material, but they stem from later editing after the fall of the northern kingdom (1:1, 7; 2:2[1:11]; 4:15; 5:5, 10, 12-14; 6:4, 11; 8:14; 10:11; 12:1[11:12]b, 3[2]a); all of the oracles of salvation come from an exilic redaction (2:1-3[1:10-2:1], 15b-25[13b-23]; 3:1-5; 5:15-6:3, 5b; 11:10, 11; 14:2-10[1-9]). As a result, the extent and type of secondary material in the book is, according to Marti, wider than in the case of Wellhausen, particularly in the oracles of salvation (Hos 2:1-3[1:10-2:1], 15b-25[13b-23]), which Wellhausen interpreted as original with the exception of v18.

#### L1.5 W. R. Harper (1905a)

Harper (clviii-clxii), another literary critic like Marti, notes Marti's conclusion that Hos 1-3 should not be separated from Hos 4-14; but he follows the traditional division of Hos 1-3; 4-14. However, with some

modifications, he basically agrees with Marti on the extent of secondary material as well as the history of the origin and transmission of the book. He discussed secondary materials in Hosea in the following four major groups:

1) Like Marti, Harper attributes most of the Judah references to the work of a Judaistic editor in the southern kingdom (1:7; 5:10, 12-14; 6:4, 11a; 8:14; 10:11b; 12:1[11:12]b, 3[2]).

2) He regards the passages which express hope for the future, the so-called 'Messianic allusions', as secondary additions, which are 'entirely inconsistent with Hosea's point of view, and directly contradictory to the representations which are fundamental in his preaching' (11:9; 13:9, 14).

3) In addition, after ten examples of 'phrases and sentences of a technical, archaeological, or historical character, inserted by way of expansion and explanation' in chs 4-10 (4:13d; 5:6; 7:4, 16c; 8:8b; 9:1b, 9a, 10; 10:5, 14b), Harper mentions 12:14[13], 'magnifying the prophetic phase of Moses's work; 13:4b-7, presenting Jacob in a favourable light'.

4) Afterwards he discerns a group of miscellaneous glosses and interpolations, for example, 8:4 'that they may be cut off', etc. And finally he attributes 14:10[9] to 'the later wisdom period'.

#### L1.6 D. B. Duhm (1910)

In the preface of his commentary on the Minor Prophets, which was published by the same publisher as Marti's (1904), Duhm noted Marti's



influence on his treatment of the text. Thus, Duhm maintained similar views to those of Marti, except for a few details in which he deviated from Marti. For instance, like Marti, Duhm also interpreted 2:1-3[1:10-2:1] as an addition to the preceding chapter; vv4-15a[2-13a] constitutes Hosea's prophecy, while vv15b-25[13b-23] is a later interpolation, which was quite opposite to what Hosea said at that time.

#### L1.7 H. S. Nyberg (1935)

The year 1935 can be marked as a turning point in studies on the composition of the book of Hosea. In it, Nyberg (7-9), one of the representatives of so-called 'Scandinavian School' (which is generally against the position of the literary critics who separate the text into primary and secondary sources), suggested a completely different theory about the book. Nyberg insisted on the reliability of the oral composition and transmission process for faithfully preserving the tradition down through the centuries.

According to Nyberg, the transmission of a work in the orient and particularly within the Old Testament was mainly *oral*, not written, since prophets and poets were not writers/authors; the written Old Testament was the creation of the post-exilic Jewish community, which fixed in written form the traditions that had circulated orally. During the circulation some modification in the material had happened, on account of which we can see inconsistency in the text. On the basis of his fundamental attitude to the nature of oral composition and transmission, Nyberg doubts the possibility of recovering the *ipsissima verba* of the prophet.

With regard to the structure and composition of the book of Hosea, Nyberg (17-18) maintains that the book has two different parts: chs 1-3; 4-14. Chs 1-3 came from Hosea's circle; these materials were greatly transformed in Jerusalem (cf. especially 3:5) and took on a new eschatological meaning. Also in chs 4-14, we can see the Jerusalemite revision, particularly in 6:11 and the frequent insertions of Judah in passages where 'Israel' was originally read. For chs 4-14 he produces the same image for the composition as Mowinckel offered for Deutero-Isaiah: that Hos 4-14 is a whole composition on the 'key-word' or 'catch word' principle. Hosea himself did not organize Hos 4-14. According to Nyberg (18-19), probably united sections containing his sermons were composed by Hosea; the remaining text was organized by a collector according to his own point of view.

## **I.2 Current Interpretation of the Book of Hosea**

### **I.2.1 H. W. Wolff (1961a (German): 1974 (English))**

One of the pioneering works on the book of Hosea must be Wolff's commentary on Hosea which originally appeared in BKAT (1961) and its second edition (1965) has been translated for the Hermeneia series (1974). His commentary is one of the results of his long research and interest in form criticism. The methodology has been expressed in his previous studies<sup>v</sup> on Hosea. For example, in his article Wolff (1952-53a) has suggested that we should first of all identify the literary unity of individual passages in order to interpret the meaning of the text of Hosea properly. Hence, in the section 'Form' in his commentary (1974:24-25), Wolff begins with the discussion of the delimitation of Hos 2:1-3[1:10-2:1].



One characteristic of Wolff's interests is his consistent search for the historical background of the book of Hosea (1974:xxi):

Prophetic proclamation is a special way of speaking to man in his time. Prophecy addressed Israel in the midst of her history. Any attempt to comprehend prophecy apart from the historical events surrounding it would only result in misunderstanding.

Although Wolff also admits that we have very little biographical information about Hosea, he maintains that the authentic oracles of Hosea preserved in the book can be dated with a high degree of accuracy during Hosea's prophetic activity around 752-724 B.C. Accordingly, in the main body of his commentary, Wolff has continually attempted to connect units with possible historical evidence/allusions.

Wolff (1974:xxiii) maintains that Hosea belongs to those Levitical circles of the northern kingdom, who were the predecessors of Deuteronomy and Deuteronomistic theology. This is seen by 'the numerous connections between the Hosean traditions and the language and theology of Deuteronomy'; he even argues that 'entire complexes of thought characteristic of Deuteronomic paraenesis occur first in Hosea' (1974:xxxi). Wolff's position concerning Hosea's background has been basically endorsed by Brueggemann (1968).

In the section 'The Transmission of Hosea's Prophecy', Wolff (1974:xxix-xxxi) presents a complex view concerning the history of the growth and composition of the book of Hosea. According to him, there are three large transmission complexes (chs 1-3; 4-11; and 12-14) in the book:

(A) In the first large transmission complex (chs 1-3), Wolff supposes that Hosea himself is responsible for 2:4-17[2-15] judging from the theme and the technique of its composition, and for 3:1-5 on the basis of the first person style; a disciple is responsible for 1:2-6, 8-9 because it is a third person account, and for 2:1-3[1:10-2:1], 18-25[16-23] which show similar elements of composition to those in 1:2-6, 8-9. Wolff assumes that 1:1, 7; 2:10[8]b $\beta$ ; 3:5b have nothing to do with Hosea himself.

(B) The second large transmission complex (chs 4-11) has its framework provided by the formulas: שמעו דבר יהוה 'hear the word of Yahweh' in 4:1a and נאם יהוה 'the oracle of Yahweh' in 11:11b $\beta$ . This complex consists of kerygmatic units describing sketches of scenes which were written down by Hosea's circle soon after Hosea had delivered his message; and the sketch followed a chronological order.

(C) The present shape of the third complex (chs 12-14) came from 'a new proclamation of these words in the context of worship (cf. 12:6[5]), perhaps in the area near the Judean border (cf. 12:1[11:12]b, 3[2]a MT)' (1974:234), and the complex fits the last period of the northern kingdom during the time of Shalmaneser V.

His conclusions on these three complexes are as follows:

All three large complexes of transmission are parallel to each other in that they each move from accusation to threat, and then to proclamation of salvation. Each may stem from different writers, but they all belong to the same circle of Hosea's contemporary followers, who also were the forerunners of the Deuteronomic movement.



In addition to transmission units, Wolff (1974:xxx-xxxi) distinguishes rhetorical units and kerygmatic units. The former is the smallest unit of discourse, in which a genre may be discerned, whilst the latter is a prophetic address on one occasion. Wolff (1974:xxiii) also attempts to identify the genres in a unit and their settings, and remarks that 'most of Hosea's sayings are reminiscent of those speech forms which have their *Sitz im Leben* in the legal dispute between two parties'.

On Wolff's distinctive positions on the book of Hosea, we can offer the following comments:

With regard to Hosean influence on Deuteronomy, although we do not doubt it, Wolff's argument for both relationships appears to be too tidy: for example, his calling the contemporary tradents of Hosean tradition 'forerunners of the Deuteronomic movement' (1974:xxxi). We seem to have to acknowledge that there are affinities and at the same time differences between them: Hosea deals with God's love for Israel, while Deuteronomy speaks of Israel's love for God, which Hosea does not mention. Weinfeld (1972:368) explains a difference between the connotation of love in Hosea and that in Deuteronomy: "Love of God" in Deuteronomy is --- predominantly the loyalty of Israel, the vassel, to God, the sovereign, whereas in Hosea and Jeremiah the love has an affectionate connotation as in love between husband and wife'. Hosea describes the relationship of God and Israel in the figures of the love of husband and wife (Hos 1-3) and of father and son (Hos 11). In Deuteronomy, however, there is no parallel to the love of husband and wife as in Hos 1-3, and the love of father and son belongs to a different context from that of Hosea: it is not an affectionate



love as in Hos 11, but instead of love, a demand of father to his son is emphasized (cf. Dt 21:15-21) - although we cannot completely avoid a nuance of an affectionate love (cf. Dt 1:31; 8:5). In this regard, it appears that the relationship between Hosea and Deuteronomy should not be overemphasised.

As to Wolff's 'rhetorical' (rhetorischen) and 'kerygmatic' (kerygmatischen) units (1974:xxxf.; 32f.), it appears to be often difficult to discern them clearly. It seems that Wolff has defined a rhetorical unit in a rather narrower way: it is the smallest unit of an address, whilst a kerygmatic unit is the prophet's sayings on one and the same occasion. A kerygmatic unit cannot immediately be regarded as a rhetorical unity, since 'between the rhetorical units, the audience may have voiced its objections, or the speaker may have turned from one group to address another'. In this case, it seems to be often difficult to distinguish the nature and extent of the sayings interrupted by Hosea's audience. Hence, the relationship of rhetorical unit to kerygmatic unit appears to have to be clarified more than Wolff has. Here there seem to be limitations on the contribution form criticism can make to literary units/structure, as Knierim (1973:467-468) remarks:

What Gunkel had in mind was mainly a history of the Old Testament genres. Our review, however, of the problems inherent in the form-critical method seems to indicate that just this conceptualization of the task may not be sufficient for achieving the goal. Form criticism has employed a monolithic conception of genre and assumed the homogeneity of the typical factors inherent in it. This may --- paradoxically --- have been counter-productive to its own original intentions. To some extent it may have caused the discipline to lose sight of the conditions of the living process to which language and literature are subjected. The historical manifestations of typical forms, especially the interrelationship of the various typicalities in linguistic entities, and their influence on individual texts seem to be more flexible than form criticism has been prepared to assume. This must be said

at least in view of the whole of the Old Testament literature ---. Recent progress in the methods for interpretation of language and literature does shed new light on the problems which form criticism has faced with its own texts. In view of this, interpreting Old Testament literature and language ought to be within a context in which both appear as manifestations of communication, born by will to communicate and functioning within such communication; that is they include the horizon of understanding and expectation of readers and listeners and, having a historical dimension, are subject to the changing horizon in communication. --- such findings may occasionally show that a text is governed by factors beyond those asked for by the form-critical method.

Knierim's discussion on communication between speakers/authors and listeners/readers in a text seems to be a subject of what is normally called rhetorical criticism.

A/F (72), who use different approaches to Hosea from those of Wolff, also commented on the limitations of Wolff:

Wolff's commentary (1974) is conspicuous for the determination with which he tackles the twin preliminary tasks of form and date, which must be settled before he proceeds to interpret any piece in terms of its function in the community. Unfortunately, the boundaries of the individual units he separates are not clearly marked in many cases; the forms they exhibit are rarely in agreement with theoretical norms. There is a limit to the degree that definitions of forms can be stretched to cater to the variety that is met, for they soon lose the distinctiveness essential to their use. The recognition of mixed forms grants more scope to the individual creativity of the speaker on each occasion; but the more one moves in that direction, the less chance he has of being certain about the life-setting of the form. If the originality of the author means a weakening of the constraints of custom, then the way is open to think of more literary uses of the material, liberated from institutionalized patterns (such as lawsuits); and an expectation of continued, rather than once-for-all, use. Indeed, one must ask if the preservation of the prophetic speeches was fostered by such a movement toward literature for repeated use, for more than the memory of a past moment. To the extent that this might be so, the obligation to account for all



the references in a passage in terms of a given historical movement is correspondingly reduced.

In short, although we can realize the above limitations of Wolff's approach to the Hosean text due mainly to his basing his analyses on form and historical date, at the same time we should appreciate his thorough theological exposition: through his pioneering work, Wolff has opened many new ways for an understanding of the book of Hosea.

### L2.2 W. Rudolph (1966)

As an alternative to the work on Hosea by Wolff who has followed the Alt-Noth-von Rad tradition in German Old Testament scholarship, the KAT series produced a commentary on Hosea by Rudolph five years after Wolff's. Hence, Rudolph would naturally have seen Wolff's work on each of Hosea's sections. Their different points of view are particularly clear in their interpretations of the marriage of Hosea. Wolff regards chs 1-3 as realistic reports of prophetic symbolic actions, and not as dream, vision, allegory or psychic phenomena. Based on the evidence of the existence of the sex cult in Herodotus, other classical sources, and Canaan, Wolff (1974:15) argues that Gomer was any Israelite woman: "wife of whoredom" (אִשָּׁת זָנוֹיִם) refers to any young woman ready for marriage (as in 4:13f.) who had submitted to the bridal rites of initiation then current in Israel'. And Wolff (1974:xxii) maintains that the woman of chapter three was 'most likely Gomer whom Hosea was later commanded to "love again", and whom he had to buy back for this purpose'. On the other hand, Rudolph (48) rejects most of Wolff's observations in the light of his basic interpretation that אִשָּׁת זָנוֹיִם in 1:2b



is a secondary addition: 1:2b in its present form is not primary, but the original saying was only 'Yahweh said to Hosea: take to yourself a wife that she may bear your children'. And 1:2b was then added from 2:4ff. by the Judean author of chs 1-3; in general ch 3 does not deal with a marriage but the punishment of a prostitute. Accordingly, whilst Rudolph agrees with Wolff's position that Hosea's marriage is an action symbolic of the relationship between Yahweh and Israel, he argues that ch 3 is not a continuation of ch 1 and the woman of ch 3 is not Gomer, but another unnamed Israelite. In any case, an agreement over chs 1-3 can be difficult to reach, since there are many possibilities for its interpretation.

In the section 'The Person and Time of Hosea', Rudolph (22-25) does not accept Wolff's view of the background of Hosea because of the lack of evidence: he reviews several alternatives which have been suggested, and concludes that we do not know anything of what Hosea was before his call.

Although he focused on explaining the nature of text rather than reconstructing the history of the composition of the book, like Wolff, Rudolph (23f.) does not avoid the evidence that Hosean sayings and traditions were collected and edited in Judah after the fall of Israel. As for chs 12-14, Rudolph does not doubt the authenticity of the oracles of salvation (14:2[1]f.; also 11:8f.), while he regards 12:5[4]α, the LXX of 13:4, and 14:10[9] as secondary additions.

As to the difficulties of the text of Hosea, Rudolph (20ff.) often understands the linguistic peculiarities of Hosea as being characteristic of Hebrew spoken in the northern kingdom. Increased knowledge of related

ancient languages may be able to illumine the area of the text.

To sum up. In his commentary, Rudolph's principal contributions in understanding of Hosea can be summarised in the following two ways: 1) his full discussion of textual criticism; and 2) his main concern with the text of Hosea in terms of literary and rhetorical devices described in the section 'Text and Language of the Book of Hosea' (19-22). On the other hand, he is less concerned with reconstructing its composition.

### 1.2.3 J. L. Mays (1969)

Mays's commentary on Hosea is rather concise in comparison with those of Wolff and Rudolph, since he has thought of the particular audience: 'the minister and theological student as they work on the interpretation and understanding of Scripture' (vii). This may explain why he did not offer detailed text-critical and philological notes.

For his commentary, Mays said that the commentaries on Hosea of Wolff, Rudolph, and Ward had influenced his understanding of Hosea. Among these Mays appears to have been more familiar with Wolff than Rudolph and Ward, since probably much of Mays's writing must have been done before Rudolph and Ward were in his hands. However, he often takes Wolff's evidence and discusses it differently. For example, Mays (6) argued that 'at the first stages of the collection of Hosea's sayings, individual units were woven together into integrated compositions that are held together by a common theme or setting; examples are 2:2-15; 5:8-6:6; 8:1-14'. Wolff called these compositions 'kerygmatic units'. But Mays (6) further maintained that



'composition by similar theme or catch word, or perhaps the same general period in the case of 5:8-6:6 explains the larger units adequately; and so much does not have to be imagined'.

Mays's basic approach to the commentary is form critical analysis; he (6) recognizes the following speech forms in Hosea's message:

- 1) Messages of judgment which are Hosea's major type of saying and combine reproach and announcement of punishment (e.g. 4:1-3; 5:1-2, 10; 13:4-8)
- 2) The announcement of a 'complaint' (כִּי; cf. 2:4[2]; 4:1, 4; 12:3[2])
- 3) 'Prophetic liturgy' (5:15-6:6; 14:2-9[1-8])
- 4) The salvation-oracles (2:1[1:10]f, 18-25[16-23])

Thus, in the course of his exegesis, Mays continually adopts the form-critical proposals of other scholars while giving special attention to genre, setting, style, and structure. For instance, Mays (61) deals with 4:1-3 as one unit, and argues that the collector made it the introduction to the following collection, since 'in spite of its brevity the oracle is virtually a paradigm of Hosea's message of judgment'. He described the forms and setting of the passage:

The source of the forms is legal procedure as practised in Israel's court and their use has the effect of putting the entire nation on trial, but the dramatic and theological setting is Yahweh's legal process against his people for breach of covenant. In the legal drama on which the saying is based Yahweh plays the role of prosecutor (1b $\beta$ -2) and judge (v.3).

Consequently, as with Wolff's commentary on Hosea, in Mays's work, we can also see a contribution from form criticism to the understanding of the text of Hosea. Moreover, especially in this passage, Mays gives special attention to the basic theological vocabulary of the book: אֱמֻנָה 'faithfulness',



חסד 'steadfast love', and רעת אלהים 'knowledge of God'. His discussion of the key terms of the book is to be regarded as a strength of the commentary.

The state of the text, Mays supposes, may be attributed to the difficult circumstances of its transmission to Judah after the fall of the northern kingdom; following Rudolph, Mays (5) thinks that the peculiarities of the Hebrew are probably due to dialectal distinctiveness of syntax and vocabulary persisting in the text.

In sum. Although his commentary is concise (approximately half the length of some others) because of the audience he had in mind for the commentary, Mays's work is useful as offering a clear and understandable interpretation of Hosea.

#### L2.4 M. J. Buss (1969)

Buss's monograph, though not published till 1969, is a revision of his 1958 doctoral thesis presented to Yale University. In this revision Buss takes the opportunity to react to Wolff's proposals published in the intervening years.

Buss discussed the book of Hosea with a method, which he described as 'morphological' in the title of his monograph. Buss (1) claims to deal freely with the elements of form criticism, so his methodology can be described as a modification of classical form criticism:

A morphological approach, ---, differs somewhat from Gunkel's pattern by not limiting itself to an analysis of genres and by dealing freely with any form of verbal patterns and also with stylistic tendencies which may not be absolutely rigorous or

may cut across other aspects of classification.

Thus, in chapter II: 'The Data in Translation', Buss (6-27) provides us with a translation according to the verbal patterns and stylistic tendencies, rhythmic structure and word repetitions which he discerned in the book of Hosea. In chapter III: 'The Word as Literature', Buss (29) feels that there is a difficulty in Wolff's approach to the demarcation of individual units in the book. Alternatively, he identifies units working from the hypothesis that they have a formal opening, and paying attention to catchword association:

Individual utterances began in a full manner, i.e., mentioning Israel by name rather than opening with an expressed or unexpressed 'they' without antecedent. Another possibility lies in noting the repetition of words. Such repetitions may be due to two somewhat different causes. Either the collector of the oracles arranged these in such a manner that catchword connection would aid the memory, or the prophet himself repeated within an oracle a significant word he had just uttered.

According to the hypotheses and criteria, Buss divided the book of Hosea into twenty-three units with four cycles in chs 4-11:

**A. Chs. 1-3: ISRAEL, THE WHORE**

1:1; 1:2-2:3[1]; 2:4-25[2-23]; 3:1-5

**B. Chs. 4-14: GOD AND ISRAEL AT ODDS**

Cycle I. Cult Ruin ('Whoredom')

4:1-11; 4:12-14; 4:15-19; 5:1-7

Cycle II. The Disorder of Politics and Society ('Kings and Princes')

5:8-10; 5:11-7:7; 7:8-16; 8:1-7; 8:8-10

Cycle III. Religious Chaos ('Return to Egypt')

8:11-14; 9:1-9 (vv 1-6/7-9)

Cycle IV. Israel's Sin in History

9:10-17; 10:1-8; 10:9-15; 11:1-11



Final Collection: The Overthrow of Sacred Traditions  
12:1-15[11:12-12:14]; 13:1-11; 13:12-14:1[13:16]; 14:2-10[1-9]

From this literary analysis, Buss's conclusion is that 'most of the oracles reveal a remarkable internal unity despite their jagged style' (36).

With regard to the origin of the book of Hosea, in the light of literary criticism of Hosea, Buss (34) supposes that the book was composed by Hosea himself, and at the same time he also assumes a possibility of the activities of tradents on the basis of tradition criticism:

So far it has been taken for granted that a single author stands behind most of the traditions of the book; should this be a false assumption, one must then speak of a tradition originating within related circles in the Northern Kingdom and continuing in varying ways in Judah.

Hence, his brief summary (33-34) of the process of transmission and composition of the book, based on the suppositions of tradition criticism and literary criticism, is as follows: 'Hos 1-3 consists of three complexes, each of which has a complicated, evidently largely oral, history --- Two Judaistic additions - 1:7; 2:1-3 - complete the section (=ch 1) ---. The three parts comprising chs 1-3 evidently developed both independently and as a united whole, at differing stages'; regarding chs 4-14, Buss (34) supposes that 'while Hos 1-3 was sharply transformed in a long process of largely oral tradition, the remaining chapters appear to have been reduced to writing fairly early'. He explains the early stage of chs 4-14 as due to 'the survival of internal jaggedness within the individual sections and the relative lack of secondary growth'. Therefore, by the employment of modified form criticism, literary criticism and tradition criticism, Buss has tried to analyze the structure and the nature of the transmission and composition of the book.



On his work we can offer the following comments:

The demarcation of literary units is rightly a primary step towards the interpretation of biblical passages. Buss identified these units by way of mainly verbal patterns and stylistic tendencies. He should thus have discussed the units fully in the overall structure of the book of Hosea, since smaller units should primarily be understood within the whole structure of the book: the units have their function and meaning in the larger book. In this regard, a similar result appears in his summary of the tradition and composition of the book. In fact, to deal with only one of them requires many more details than those in Buss's section 'The size of units and the process of transmission' (28-37).

#### L2.5 E. I. Andersen & D. N. Freedman (1980)

Another important commentary on Hosea is the work of Andersen and Freedman. In the introduction to their commentary, like Wolff (1974:xxi), A/F (42) also emphasise the close relationship between prophecy and history:

The final loss of statehood and the end of national existence required drastic measures if the community was to survive as the people of God. To replace land and government, temple and palace, the cities and villages and farms which made up Israel and Judah, there had to be a Bible: a book which would embody all those things, relate history and justify the ways of God to people. Necessary to this last task was the message of the prophets who had given due warning and hence were vindicated as representatives of the true god in spite of the tragedy which overcame his people.

At the same time, A/F (72-73) realize a difficulty in deciding a clear time and place for Hosea's sayings:

We know so little of the historical framework that we can rarely identify people and events with any confidence. In spite of the stout attempts of scholars, it is practically impossible to date or place any of Hosea's oracles with certainty; and, rather than guess, or, worse, force the passage into some selected historical occasion that we happen to know a little about, we have tried to manage without this aid, even though most of the time we are left groping. We have only to mention the remarkable fact that cc 4-14 do not contain the name of a single historical personage in Israel to underscore the scholars' predicament. Hence we have had to be content with a more modest task, simply describing the literary characteristics of each section, making only cautious guesses about what the historical circumstances might be.

Hence, this may be why they are not interested in reconstructing earlier stages in the growth of the text, since they suppose not only that it is difficult to identify the historical settings which may underly the text, but also that there is ambiguity over the genres which are used to recover original units of tradition in form criticism.

They are accordingly not interested in the historical development of the book of Hosea. Their cautious concluding remarks (57) on the literary history are:

Suffice it to say that while a sixth-century setting is not unlikely for the final editing and publication of Hosea as part of a larger corpus, there is little evidence of any tampering with the text in the interest of updating its material. For the most part it remains archaic, fitting better into an eighth-century setting than anywhere else, and more acceptably than some of the other literature traditionally associated with this period.

Thus, their dating is early in contrast to the general tendency influenced



particularly by Wolff.

As a result, A/F (59) presuppose one author and one text: the individual oracles are 'sophisticated compositions employing a variety of literary devices and reflecting the creative genius of the prophet himself'. So, they preclude an investigation of the process of the composition of the book:

As we turn to the question of the literary character of the work, we must consider two anterior issues: the unity of the work, and the integrity of the text. In both cases, our premise and point of departure are conservative, that the book is essentially the work of a single person, and that the text is basically sound. These are hardly ringing affirmations; they are more like defensive desperation. If the opposite were true, if many hands and voices could be found in the book, then we would have the thankless and ultimately fruitless task of apportioning the work among a variety of people whose existence is hypothetical, and whose only distinguishing mark is some obscurity or inconsistency in the text.

Hence, A/F focus on the text as it presently stands before us: the final form of the text. Their methodology is accordingly a synchronic one, which is a form of rhetorical criticism well exemplified in their detailed analyses of chs 1-3, in which they list 52 examples of repetition of the same word or root with the same meaning, and 21 occurrences of closely related ideas. They mention various literary/rhetorical devices and effects: chiasms, inclusions, introversions, parallels and repetitions (133-181). The same approach has been adopted throughout chapters 4-14.

We can offer the following comments on their work:

As for the text of Hosea, they have high respect for the received Hebrew text: although they acknowledge that the text is full of difficulties, their



attitude to the ancient versions, which are generally known as useful in the understanding of difficult texts, is not positive (66):

Whatever the deficiencies of the Hebrew text, the versions are no better, and in general are not so good. The only one that is worth serious thought is the Greek, but the LXX can hardly be construed as a witness to a different Hebrew Vorlage ---. No doubt there are places where [the translator] had a Hebrew text different from the MT (where it is not the result of a common scribal error) and rendered accordingly. As to whether particular readings presupposed by the Greek translation are better than those preserved in the MT, or the other way around, such matters can only be decided on their merits in individual cases. By and large, the MT is superior to all the versions.

As they admitted, however, we need to evaluate every text to secure a text closer to an authentic text, if at all possible. In this regard, we can note McKane's commentary on Jeremiah (1986), in which he fully deals with ancient versions to reach to a text closer to an original text.

With regard to the background of Hosea, it appears to be difficult to reconstruct it concretely as a result of the small number of clear indicators of historical settings. However, we should attempt to probe the historical context underlying the text in order to understand it better. A/F actually make claims about the relationship between prophecy and history in the introduction to their commentary. Thus, it seems that, like Wolff, in the main body of their commentary, they should have attempted to locate particular prophecies in the particular historical settings of the book of Hosea.

As to genres, A/F usually disregard them. However, to identify genres can be useful for the exegesis of a text, since basically there are common or

typical formulae in human communication, although they are sometimes mixed and changed by certain situations. Hence, we have no reason to avoid form criticism, if we do want to understand the nature of Hosea's language more precisely. In fact, A/F (342-343) do use form criticism, for example, for their interpretation of ch 4: they distinguish typical speeches of a chief priest, oaths and prohibitions.

Moreover, in addition to their detailed studies on the units of the book, we have also to note their view of organic or thematic continuity for the overall structure of the book. Melugin's review article (1982:115) is appropriate here:

Despite the fact that this commentary centres upon the final form of the text, one looks largely in vain for analyses of the *structure* of the text in its present form. To be sure, the commentary is replete with discussions concerning word-repetition, theme, and other literary features which contribute to the organization of the text, but all of these do not neatly coincide. We can but be grateful for the authors' refusal to force them into an arbitrary scheme; yet we regret the apparent lack of concern to search for overarching structural patterns. It seems incongruous that the Book of Hosea can be divided into various parts and then treated as unrelated entities as if they were simply beads on a string, while at the same time an intricate rhetorical analysis occurs within each of the parts.

In sum, in spite of the weaknesses of their commentary, their cautious analyses of the text itself, offering thorough and deep analyses, and not going beyond the text should be seen as a strong point in their work – since their basic approach is to attempt to let the text have its say.



### 1.2.6 G. I. Emmerson (1984)

In the nineteen-eighties, three important monographs on Hosea have been published. One of them is Emmerson's work, which is the revision of her doctoral thesis submitted to the university of Newcastle-Upon-Tyne in 1982. The purpose of the work is to investigate the Judean elements in the book of Hosea in the light of redaction criticism. On the basis of the grammatical and historical study of a series of particular texts, Emmerson explored the nature and extent of Judean redactional activity in the book of Hosea in the following three areas:

1) Salvation sayings (2:16-17, 18-25[14-15, 16-23]; 11:8-11; 14:5-9[4-8]), in which Hosea's own oracles of a future salvation depending always on the initiative of Yahweh has been changed to emphasise that the repentance of the people must precede their salvation: the initiative lays not with Yahweh but with the people. The modification has been as a result of Judean redaction.

2) References to Judah and the Davidic monarchy (12:3[2]; 5:5, 10-14; 6:4; 8:14; 4:15; 10:11; 6:11; 1:7; 2:2[1:11]; 3:5; 12:1[11:12], with excursuses on Hosea's attitudes to reunion, and to monarchy), in which limited criticism of Judah relating particularly to its hostile relationship with the northern kingdom and a longing for the Davidic dynasty (1:7; 3:5) are attributed to Hosea, while broad criticism of Judah's cultic worship and religious life stemmed from Judean redactional activity.

3) Israelite worship: its sanctuaries and cult practices (the polemic against



sanctuaries mainly at Bethel and Gilgal; the offering of sacrifices in 13:2; 14:3[2]), in which a different more hostile attitude corresponds to the total rejection of northern sanctuaries themselves found in the Deuteronomistic material of the Josianic reform. In contrast, Hosea showed a positive attitude towards northern sanctuaries: he honoured the sanctuaries themselves, while the corrupted cult practices were condemned. The more negative interpretation originated in later Judean circles.

As for the above three areas, if we re-examine them in the light of the overall picture of the literary structure of the book, we may read them differently. For example, in the area of salvation sayings, Emmerson regards Hos 14:2-9[1-8] as Hosean oracles, but argues that the promise of salvation (vv5-9[4-8]) had originally no relationship to the call to repentance (vv2-4[1-3]) which now precedes it in the present text; that the present arrangement of vv2-4[1-3]/5-9[4-8] was due to the activity of the Judean editors who emphasised Israel's repentance prior to Yahweh's salvation through his grace. Hence, Emmerson made a division between two theologies: Hosea's theology is that the initiative is always Yahweh's saving action, while that of the Judean redactors is that repentance must precede salvation. The initiative lies, therefore, not with Yahweh but with the nation. In her conclusion, Emmerson (164) summarises both theologies:

It is important that the book of Hosea should be allowed to address us theologically, not only as a totality but in its different strands of tradition. The different emphases of the two theologies of repentance are both alike necessary, and are indeed complementary to each other. They serve as a reminder that the divine word is always rooted in history. Changed circumstances require a different aspect of the truth. The emphasis of the primary stratum which comes from Hosea in the 8th century concerns God's sovereign freedom to act in

salvation even when man is totally undeserving. The later Judean emphasis concerns the importance of man's response to the summons to repent, the need for an act of will. It is significant that in that basic article of Israel's faith, the Sinai covenant, the two aspects are combined. Heavy obligation is laid upon the nation to respond, but the covenant itself is rooted in the divine initiative. Continuance of the relationship lies with man's volition: the offer of the relationship rests solely on the grace of God. But to explore further the interrelationship of these two factors must belong to another study.

We can appreciate Emmerson's distinction of the two theologies, Yahweh's saving act and the nation's repentance in the book of Hosea. However, it may be difficult for all to conclude that the former theology is entirely Hosea's and the latter one is completely Judean, as she herself feels it difficult to distinguish the two theological stances clearly.<sup>1</sup> The following structural analyses of this study will argue that both theologies came from Hosea in the 8th century who witnessed to the grace of God for Israel.

However, considering the fact that the process of the transmission and composition of the book of Hosea itself is a complex whole, and that the precise relationship of the stages of the editorial activity in the book to the influence of Deuteronomy on Hosea is still an open question, her detailed discussion of the three areas, and of the relationship of northern and southern traditions within the material, on the basis of careful redaction criticism has made a useful contribution to our understanding of the nature and extent of the redactional material in the book of Hosea.

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<sup>1</sup> Cf. Hubbard (1989:44).



### L2.7 G. A. Yee (1987)

Still more recently, in her monograph, Yee deals with the composition and transmission of the book of Hosea. The work is a revision of her doctoral thesis presented to the Faculty of Theology of the University of Toronto in 1985.

As indicated in the subtitle of her monograph, Yee's methodological approach to the work is also by means of redaction criticism. After her survey in ch 1 of previous theories of the composition of Hosea, Yee criticizes presuppositions in Hosean scholarship, especially analyses of the book's composition which focus on the preliterate levels of the text; and then argues for redaction-critical analyses, in which Yee (261) identifies the following four stages of growth in the book of Hosea:

- 1) Hosea himself.
- 2) Collector, who was 'most likely' Hosea's disciple.
- 3) Redactor 1 (R1), who 'seems to share the same deuteronomistic Judean orientation as (the) final redactor, R2, manifesting a particular concern for cult and cult practices', and he 'seems to be pre-exilic'.
- 4) Redactor 2 (R2), who 'is exilic'.

It is noteworthy that, in contrast to the traditional critical practices which concentrate on the earliest form of the material and then move to the latest, Yee begins the investigation with the final redacted state of the text and then proceeds to discuss its earlier stages of the tradition of Hosea. Her argument for this procedure is (48-49):

When one has determined the literary gestalt of the final composer and structure which he has imposed upon the work, when one has ascertained his religio-political thrust in the selection and arrangement of his material, one then has a more

secure foundation to deal with the question of older traditions in the text.

Yee's two main criteria for determining the extent of the final redaction are:

1) The presence of *aporiae* or difficulties in the text, for example, 'sudden changes in person and number, repetitions, expansions, or inconsistencies in thought', etc. Yee explains that the disparities in the text came from later commentary on earlier tradition: the text is composed of *alternating tradition and redactional commentary*. She maintains that we can solve the problems in the text by redaction-critical points of view. As a result, Yee (50) has minimised textual emendations based on other ancient versions.

2) The analysis of the final literary structure, which gives its own clues to the internal thrust of the final redaction, and in which the final redactor articulates the literary purpose of the work, and through which the earlier tradition is refracted.

On Yee's approach to the work, we may comment as follows:

In the light of her redactional analyses, Yee keeps textual emendation based on the ancient versions to a minimum. However, as we noted earlier, not only in the case of Hosea but also of every book of the Bible, we need to weigh textual evidence to reach closer to an authentic text, if at all possible. In this respect, the ancient versions offer help in securing a better text; their role should not be subordinated to redactional analysis.



As to her identification of Hosea/Collector/R1/R2 as the main steps in the redactional history of the book of Hosea (cf. Appendix (315-317)), I wonder 1) whether Hosea's own oracles are as scarce as in Yee's analysis. For example, she regards 14:2-10[1-9] as R2's work. However, as in Wolff, Mays, and A/F, the following structural analyses of this present study will claim 14:2-9 as authentic;<sup>2</sup> and 2) whether the Collector did not work in chs 3-14 at all but only in chs 1-2. Hence, it appears that at least her four stages need to be reviewed. In spite of these limitations, however, it seems that as far as the area of the growth and composition of the book of Hosea is concerned, her work is helpful.

#### L2.8 H.-D. Neef (1987)

In the introduction to his monograph, which is the revision of his doctoral thesis presented to the University of Tübingen in 1985, Neef (7) maintains that the use of traditions virtually appears '*das Signum*' of the book of Hosea. Hence, it is necessary and meaningful, according to Neef, to investigate the references to the Jacob-, Moses-, Exodus-, Wilderness-, Sinai-, Covenant- and Decalogue traditions in the book. Thus, his methodological approach is to pay attention to which tradition Hosea received/included, to which originals Hosea went back, and whether Hosea in some way changed, shortened or extended them (11).

As to the Jacob tradition, Neef (22-24) surveys the views of Rudolph,

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<sup>2</sup> Cf. Rudolph and Emmerson treat 14:2-9 as authentic but hold that its present position results from later redaction.

Vollmer, Willi-Plein that the Jacob tradition is not based on authentic oracles of Hosea, and then he maintains that the Jacob tradition needs to be re-examined: the tradition is not a block, but it should be interpreted in the context of the whole of ch 12. In Neef's evaluation (25-35), there are two main groups of researches into the Jacob tradition in Hos 12 since 1860: the one interprets the tradition positively, for example, Ewald, Hitzig, Keil, and Ackroyd; and the other understands the tradition negatively, for instance, Wellhausen, Marti, Nowack, Rudolph, Wolff, and Jeremias.

Neef himself has two main positions on the Jacob tradition in Hos 12:

1) Hosea alludes to the Jacob tradition which is actually not different from a form of the story in Genesis which now we have, although we are not certain whether the form is written or oral. That is, the allusion to Jacob in Hos 12 presupposes that the Jacob tradition in Hosea's time must have been generally known, since otherwise it could not have been used in Hosea's proclamation (cf. 'Hosea's knowledge of Jacob Tradition' (45-47)). Neef applies such an approach not only to the Jacob tradition but also to the Moses-, Wilderness-, Covenant-, and Decalogue-traditions (cf. the table of Hosea's references to the traditions in Genesis (246)).

2) Neef (36-45) interprets the Jacob tradition in Hos 12 positively. For example, he suggests that it is possible to suppose a form of promise in רֶחֶם 'womb' in Hos 12:4[3]a, since רֶחֶם is used in the promise to Rebekah in Gen 25:23: 'When her days to be delivered were fulfilled, behold, there were twins in her womb'. He renders אָחַז in Hos 12:4a as 'to hold on to the heel' rather than 'to deceive'. In Hos 12:4b-5a, Jacob is described as a man blessed



by God through his insistent struggle with God, in which there is no emphasis on Jacob's impudence, boldness or hybris. Hos 12:13b alludes to Jacob's love for Rachel (Gen 29:18, 20, 30), and to his service for her. So the service did not come from Jacob's deceit. Thus, Hosea described Jacob as a model for sinful Israel: since Hosea referred to the Jacob tradition to demonstrate how great was the gap between Israel's *hopeful* being at the beginning of her history and her present *hopeless* existence. So, the Jacob tradition is used by Hosea, according to Neef (48-49; 131-133), to expose Israel's present sin in comparison with her good beginning in Jacob.

Neef's positive interpretation of the Jacob tradition is also applied to other traditions in the book of Hosea. For example, as in the case of Jacob, the Moses tradition is represented as the beginning of the history of Israel, and is in contrast to the present unfaithful Israel; as Jacob served for Rachel, Moses served for Israel and delivered her from Egypt. However, Israel rejected both Jacob's and Moses's service for her, so actually she rejected Yahweh himself. Accordingly, Neef (50-57; 234) argues, through the lives of both exemplary models of Jacob and Moses, Hosea revealed Israel's present guilt, deceit, self-righteousness, and boastfulness, etc. in the hope that Israel might be saved through her repentance. As a result, Hosea used and incorporated the salvation tradition from the Pentateuch in *continuity with the tradition* (Kontinuität zur Tradition) to proclaim that Yahweh is *Israel's God* (247-256).

However, it appears that when we interpret the Jacob tradition in Hosea in terms of the overall structure of Hosea, the Jacob tradition seems to have to be interpreted negatively rather than positively, since the general mood

of Hos 12 appears to be a severe indictment of the sin of Israel who is not different from her ancestor Jacob. The following structural analyses of this present study will argue for Hosea's negative interpretation of the tradition.

In spite of his different points of view from this present work on the Jacob tradition, the fact that Neef begins his discussion with the translation of each passage with text critical notes appears to be one of the strong points in his work, since every biblical text needs to be examined in consultation with ancient manuscripts and versions to get a better text, if at all possible. Hence, for the study of the text, he repeatedly refers especially to LXX among other ancient versions. For example, in Hos 12:8, Neef supports the reading of the MT לעשק 'to oppress' attested also in LXX; Vul, rather than emending it as לעקש 'to defraud'. His interest in LXX had already been demonstrated in his thorough study (1986) on LXX/MT in the book of Hosea. Neef's position on LXX is thus strikingly in contrast to that of Yee's redaction criticism of the book of Hosea, who minimized the significance of ancient versions.

Another strong point of Neef's work seems to be his discussion of the units and subunits of each passage, since it is generally known that to determine the boundaries of literary units is important for understanding any text.

#### 1.2.9 D. Stuart (1987)

In the 'General Introduction' to his recent volume of individual commentaries on Hosea-Jonah (Word Biblical Series), Stuart (xxxi-xxxii) asserts his position on prophets in the Old Testament in these words:



The Old Testament prophets carried on their inspired ministries within a tradition that consciously and directly went back to the ancient Mosaic covenant as expressed in the Pentateuch i.e., its first statement in Exodus-Numbers and its renewal in Deuteronomy.

Therefore, his view on the originality of prophecy is that prophets are neither inventors of any new doctrine, nor creators of any type of curses or blessings. As Yahweh's spokespersons, they had simply referred to the curses and blessings of the Pentateuch, since the two types finally appear again in prophetic books. Hence, throughout this volume, Stuart keeps his basic position: prophetic dependency on the Mosaic covenant curses and restoration blessings. So, he regularly makes comparisons with the curses and blessings of the Pentateuch covenant in order to understand the Old Testament prophets. His list of twenty seven types of covenant curses and ten types of covenant restoration blessings (xxxii-xlii) provides a reference point to the following discussion in this volume.

In this connection, at the very beginning of his 'Introduction' to Hosea, Stuart (6-7) again lays stress on Hosea's reliance on the curses and blessings of the Mosaic covenant:

Understanding the message of the book of Hosea depends upon understanding the Sinai covenant. The book contains a series of blessings and curses announced for Israel by God through Hosea. Each blessing or curse is based upon a corresponding type in the Mosaic law. Some blessings and curses so specifically parallel the pentateuchal formulations that they border on 'citation', though citation per se was unknown in ancient legal procedure; others more generally, merely allude to the pentateuchal wordings. Although Hosea's style was in many ways original, his message was not at all innovative. Hosea's task was simply to warn that Yahweh intended to enforce the terms of his covenant.

Stuart (17-18) ends the 'Introduction' with a statement that Hosea's oracles fall into three categories: evidence, curses, and blessings. According to him, about two-thirds of the book of Hosea belongs to the announcement of evidence, about one-quarter to curses, and not more than a tenth to blessings, respectively. He insists that all these categories stemmed from the Pentateuch:

1) *evidence* - This demonstrates that 'Israel is guilty of covenant-breaking, i.e., of doing what the Mosaic covenant says they may not do'.

2) *curses* - 'The kinds of curses Hosea announces are exactly the same words of curses the Mosaic covenant contains in its sanction sections (Lev 26, Deut 28-32, and in limited format, Deut 4). --- Hosea does not innovate curses. He announces curses only according to the categories the Pentateuch contains.'

3) *blessings* - 'The blessings are --- all announced for the distant future, the era of restoration which the Mosaic covenant promises will follow *after* the punishments for covenant-breaking have run their course (Lev 26:41-42; Deut 4:30; 30:2-3).'

Thus, in the interpretation of Hosea, Stuart continually refers to the curse and blessings of the Mosaic covenant: he confirms that Hosea had been highly aware of covenant terminology, and had depended deeply upon the blessings and curses of the Pentateuch.



Although we realise the affinities between Hosea and the Pentateuch, especially Deuteronomy,<sup>3</sup> it seems that Stuart's approach to Hosea's dependence on the Pentateuch may be understood differently when it is recognised that in his own historical and literary context, Hosea emphasised the relationship of Yahweh to Israel by his favourite terms rather than simply relying on the Pentateuch. Our structural analyses will discern the terms and discuss how they function to convey Hosea's message.

Despite his different point of view from ours on Hosea's relationship to the Pentateuch, Stuart's commentary is useful in understanding the meaning of Hosea in the following ways: through his discussion of textual criticism, structural criticism (form, setting) (both will be reviewed in the following chapters II and III respectively), 'Comment', 'Explanation', and the comprehensive bibliographical references.

### I.3 Concluding Observations

In Old Testament scholarship, in order to interpret biblical texts, various methods have been used: textual criticism, literary criticism, form criticism, tradition criticism, redaction criticism, and structural criticism. These principles should help each other to contribute to the full understanding of a text, rather than be contrasted to one another: they each provide useful information to interpret a text appropriately, since they are interrelated with each other.

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<sup>3</sup> Cf. Brueggemann (1968); Weinfeld (1972); and Craigie (1976).

In the case of Hosea, by way of the above review of the major literature on the book of Hosea, we have been able to see that various methods have been used to interpret the book: throughout the history of the interpretation of the book, every translator and commentator has tried to solve problems in the book, using his/her own method(s) which, they have thought, can cover the limitations of their predecessors.

Although through these efforts we have been able to recognise agreement on some issues about the meaning of the text, it should be admitted that some fundamental problems still need our continued research, due mainly to the difficulty of the text of Hosea itself. In this respect, in past Old Testament scholarship, a great deal of emphasis has been laid on the discussion of the first part of the book (Hos 1-3) in terms of the life of Hosea.<sup>4</sup> However, the second part (Hos 4-14), the oracles of Hosea, especially Hos 12-14, have received least attention in scholars' research (apart from the Jacob tradition in ch 12). Hence, for the present study of the text and structure of Hos 12-14, we suggest the following methods:

- 1) Textual criticism, since it is a basic study to understand not only Hosea but also every biblical book.
- 2) Structural criticism, since every (biblical) book has its own structure; its text should first of all be interpreted in the light of structural analyses.

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<sup>4</sup> Cf. Stuart (1987:11) notes: 'Scholars have unfortunately devoted more attention to the questions of biography raised by chaps. 1 and 3 than to the rest of the book, and the results have been predictably disappointing'.



The employment of both principles to Hos 12-14 in this present work will produce a different interpretation from the recent major works on Hosea mentioned above. A detailed discussion in terms of each method will be presented in the following chapters.

## II TEXTUAL CRITICISM OF HOSEA 12-14

### II.1 The Aim and Value of Textual Criticism

It can be said that the purpose of textual criticism is to reach backwards to obtain a text closer to the original text through reconstruction of the history of the development of a text, rather than to recover the original text (autograph, *Urtext*) itself. The original text is almost always irrecoverable. Even if we could postulate the original text, it would hardly be possible to determine its nature with any real certainty; complexity of transmission precludes this.

Lacking an original text, the most widely available and useful edition of the Masoretic Text to date is BHS.<sup>1</sup> Although we generally give priority to the MT as *textus receptus* and many consider the MT consonants as almost infallible, problems still remain. The MT inevitably contains mistakes, since all Hebrew texts (including MT) and ancient versions have been corrupted to some degree or other in their long and complex history of textual transmission. Common types of errors in the MT are discussed, for example, by Klein (1974:75-84) under the two main headings: 1) unintentional changes; and 2) intentional changes.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> This edition is the successor of BHK. Stuttgart: 1906; 2nd and 3rd ed., 1909, and 1937, whose basic text is the Leningrad Codex (B19a) copied in 1008 A.D.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. Robert (1979:27); for the case of Hosea, see, for instance, Harper (1905a:clxxvi-clxxvii).





Considering the nature of the MT, a better text is to be reconstructed by comparing the extant texts and versions with each other, and by evaluating variant readings from them. As a result, if we can supply a variant which retains a reading better than the MT, textual criticism can contribute much to making the message of the Bible more clearly known. Our effort to secure a better text therefore remains worthwhile. Hence in the present study of the text of Hosea, as is the case with other biblical texts, text critical analyses are necessarily the first stage.

Thus, this chapter aims at reviewing major literature which has dealt with textual criticism of Hosea in relatively greater detail. The review will proceed chronologically. After that I will offer my own text-critical analyses of Hosea 12-14, followed by my own translation, based on the foregoing examination.

## **II.2 Review of the Studies on the Textual Criticism of the Book of Hosea**

### **II.2.1 Scrolls from the Judean Desert**

#### **II.2.1.1 M. Testuz (1955)**

In this article, Testuz introduces a fragmentary text of Hos 13:5b-14:6[5] recovered from the Dead Sea. We can discern some differences between this text and the MT of Hosea, as follows:

- 1) In the fragment, the vowel ן, which is absent in the MT, is used:  
באלוהיה 'against her God' for באלהיה in the MT (14:1a $\beta$ ); לוֹא 'not' for

לא (14:4a $\alpha$ ); ירוחם for ירחם 'he finds compassion' (14:4b $\beta$ ).

2) The fragmentary text differs in some consonantal letters: ויבש 'and it will dry up' for ויבוש 'and he will be ashamed' (13:15b); עמכם for עמכמה 'with you' (14:3a); בכה for בך 'in you' (14:4b $\beta$ ); יך for ויך 'and he shall strike' (14:6b).

Although the text is too fragmentary to be of general significance, it offers a useful source for textual criticism of Hosea in three of its readings: ויבש (13:15b); פרים שפתינו 'the fruit of our lips' (14:3b $\beta$ , which is the same as retained in the MT); and ירוחם (14:4b $\beta$ ). A detailed discussion will follow later.

#### II.2.1.2 J. M. Allegro (1959)

His article deals with a fragment of פִּשְׁר Hosea from a Dead Sea Scroll, which comments on Hos 2:8b, 10-14[6b, 8-12] (v9[7] was missing). He notices the following differences between the fragmentary text and the MT:

1) The vowel letter ם in the fragment represents the long vowel ם in the MT, for example, אנוכי for אנכי in 2:10[8], etc.

2) The fragmentary text has some differences in consonantal letters from the MT: מלכסות for לכסות 'to cover' in 2:11[9]; אתנה for אתנם 'hire' in 2:14[12].

Despite these minor differences in vowel and consonantal letters between the two texts, they seem basically identical with each other.



### II.2.1.3 L. A. Sinclair (1980)

In this article, Sinclair introduces a fragmentary text of Hos 1:7-2:5[3] recovered from Cave IV at Qumran. He has also noticed some variation between the text and the MT:

1) The *plene* writing has been noted as a characteristic of the Qumran material: לֹא 'not' for לָא in the MT in 2:4[2], etc., but the fragmentary text does not seem to follow consistently the principle of the *plene* writing, since לָא in the text is identical with the MT in 2:1[1:10].

2) The fragmentary text is also different from the MT in some consonantal letters, for example, הָרָץ for הָאָרֶץ 'the land' in 2:2[1:11], on which Sinclair (64) notes: 'the spelling without the אֶלֶף is not unique since that spelling is found in the text of the Habakkuk commentary ---'; on הָאָ for הָאִי 'she' in 2:4[2], Sinclair regards the omission of ' in the fragmentary text as 'unusual for the 1st century B.C. "It" represents early orthography'.

In spite of these minor differences between the two texts, they do not appear to vary in any significant way; and Sinclair notes only one point at which the LXX diverges from this fragment: at the beginning of 2:1[1:10], the LXX reads καὶ ἦν (i.e. וַיְהִי) 'and it was', for the MT וַיְהִי, a reading, which, according to Sinclair, cannot be supported from the fragments. This evidence and the other published Qumran text of Hosea from the Palestinian recensional tradition suggests to Sinclair, the possibility of two text traditions for Hosea: Palestinian (Qumran and MT) and Egyptian (LXX). On

the question of a LXX text type, however, Tov (1978:62) remarked:

The use of any term such as type, recension, or family to characterize the LXX is misleading, because it calls to mind other literatures and texts in which these terms are used differently. After all, we cannot point to one characteristic textual feature which typifies the LXX as a whole or even an individual book of the LXX (except for Jeremiah), so that we can hardly speak of a LXX-type. Nor should the *Vorlage* of the LXX be named a recension or family because these terms refer to a later and more stabilized stage in the transmission of texts.

In short, further discovery in the Judean wilderness of new sources for the Hebrew text of Hosea would provide useful evidence for the reconstruction of the textual history of our book (both MT and LXX).

## II.2.2 Ancient Versions

### II.2.2.1 LXX

It is generally claimed that in the reconstruction of a better Hebrew text, LXX has played a significant part. For example, Klein (1974:vii-viii) comments:

Since the extant Hebrew evidence is either too fragmentary or already infected by scribal errors, scholars have long sought a way to recover earlier copies of the entire Bible. The LXX has provided one roundabout way to get to that earlier evidence. By translating the LXX back into Hebrew and then comparing this retroversion with whatever Hebrew manuscripts are available, text critics have managed to supplement the meager early Hebrew manuscripts.

Klein (1974:viii) continues with the claim that, particularly after the discovery of the many ancient Hebrew and Greek fragments, popularly the Dead Sea Scrolls, the importance of using readings of the LXX for textual



criticism increased at least in two ways:

The scrolls have confirmed the idea that many departures from the Hebrew text in the LXX rest on real Hebrew variants rather than merely on the freedom allegedly exercised by the translators. The Hebrew and Greek manuscripts from the Judean wilderness have enabled scholars to identify more precisely a series of recensions or revisions of the LXX, and they have led to the hypothesis that each geographical locale, such as Egypt or Palestine, had a Hebrew text type that was peculiar to it.

For the textual criticism of the Pentateuch, three main text types have usually been compared with each other: MT, Samaritan Pentateuch, and LXX. In the case of Hosea, the Dead Sea Scrolls, which comprise many fragments of various kinds of manuscript, have produced almost nothing for reconstructing the text, as has previously been noted. As a result, the significance of the LXX for text-critical analyses of Hosea is greater than it is for the text of the Pentateuch or Former Prophets. The following review of studies on the LXX of Hosea will provide evidence of the significance of the LXX for Hosea.

#### II.2.2.1.1 K. Vollers (1883)

This work of Vollers is, to the best of my knowledge, one of the earliest studies on the LXX of Minor Prophets.

Vollers (224-225) supposed an Aramaic *Vorlage* for the translation of the LXX:

Behält man den Kern der Thatsache im Auge, dass nämlich der Uebersetzer echthebräischen Stämmen, deren Bedeutung sich oft schon aus dem Zusammenhange aufdrängt, die meist weit weniger passende aramäische Bedeutung des gleichen ähnlichen

Stammes unterschiebt, so ist man wohl zu dem Schlusse berechtigt, dass das aram. Sprachgut in seinem tiefsten Bewusstsein fester wurzelte als das rein hebräische, dass das Aramäische neben dem Griechischen seine eigentliche Muttersprache war,---.

In the evaluation of both the Aramaic *Vorlage* and the Greek translation, Vollers (234) rejected a substantially redactional difference between both texts, and argued that the LXX contributed to the history of the previous transmission, partly positively, and partly negatively. Hence, he warned of an over and underestimation of the LXX.

He analysed the Alexandrian Greek text and presented its pluses and minuses (240-242), for example, A) the plus: 12:1[11:12],  $\theta\epsilon\sigma\upsilon$ ; B) the minus: 12:2[1],  $\text{ו}$  before  $\text{רָדַף}$  'to pursue'. And then he listed the variants and his solution for each (242-260), for instance, 12:2[1],  $\pi\omicron\nu\epsilon\rho\omicron\nu\ \pi\epsilon\upsilon\mu\alpha$ :  $\text{רָעָה רוּחַ}$  'evil wind' for  $\text{רָעָה רוּחַ}$  '(Ephraim) feeds the wind' in the MT.

Vollers' work on the LXX of Minor Prophets seems to have offered a useful impetus to further text-critical studies of both the LXX and the MT. His analyses of the pluses and minuses of the LXX and suggestions about the *Vorlage* of the LXX are frequently quoted in Harper's commentary (1905a) and still referred to in the recent work of Neef (1986). Perhaps the discussion of the LXX by Neef (see II.2.2.1.4 below) under the same three categories as those of Vollers' might be considered as an extended study along the lines of Vollers.



#### II.2.2.1.2 G. H. Patterson (1890-1891)

In a part of his doctoral thesis presented to Yale University, Patterson (191) considered the variants under the following three divisions: *Interpretation*, *Doubtful* cases, and *Recensional* cases:

Under *Interpretation* those variations which may, in any fair way, be attributed to the translation through free translation, different punctuation, confusion of letters, etc., are considered. Under *Doubtful* cases, those variations which are of such a nature that one cannot determine whether they are due to the translator or to a difference of MSS., are considered, and under *Recensional* those cases which can only be accounted for on the supposition that the translation is based on a MS. or MSS. differing somewhat from those underlying the Massoretic text.

He discussed the variations of interpretation under ten subdivisions (192-206); the doubtful cases under five (206-213); and the recensional variations under four (213-220), respectively.

In his concluding observations, Patterson (220-221) evaluated the LXX positively:

The fairness and the literalness of the translation are, withal, astonishing; and these would no doubt seem even greater if we had the MS. from which the translation was made. The faithful reproduction of Hebrew idioms and even the order of words in Hebrew is remarkable.

Even variations, Patterson argues, 'can only be explained as arbitrary or recensional, but the general fidelity of the translator will not allow the former explanation, moreover the excellence of the readings in many cases will not admit it'. Hence he lays emphasis on the importance of the LXX for textual investigation and biblical interpretation: 'to throw such a valuable critical aid as the Septuagint out of consideration, is to reject what

providence has preserved; it is to close one's eyes to the light'.

#### II.2.2.1.3 T. Muraoka (1983; 1986)

At the beginning of his studies on the LXX of Hosea 4 (1983), Muraoka (24-26) explains that he aims at presenting a rather new approach to the LXX, different from the method traditionally adopted by Old Testament scholars. He regards the conventional approach to the LXX as 'generally atomistic, concerned with single words or phrases or part of them'. Rather he attempts to answer: 'how the translator possibly understood his Hebrew *Vorlage*, not only single words or phrases, but the whole sentence, let alone the whole paragraph, chapter or book concerned. --- how the translation that has resulted can be understood *as Greek* without regard to the Hebrew'. For an answer to these questions, he suggests special attention be given to patristic commentaries, for example those of Theodore of Mopsuestia (c. 350-428), of Theodoret of Cyrrhus (c. 393-466), etc.; New Testament quotations and exegesis of Old Testament passages, and daughter versions based on the LXX, for instance, Old Latin, Coptic, Armenian, Syro-Palestinian Versions.

Muraoka, accordingly, argues for the wholistic approach to the LXX, since he understands that the traditional atomistic approach alone cannot fully comprehend the LXX or could misunderstand the relationship between the Hebrew and Greek forms of the text. Thus he argues that the traditional approach is to be supplemented by the new one: the non atomistic approach, which is a prerequisite for favourable results in a lexical study.



Throughout the rest of his two articles (1983 for Hosea 4; 1986 for Hosea 5), Muraoka attempts to illustrate the wholistic approach in practice, and also to show how it handles some of the questions raised above.

#### II.2.2.1.4 H.-D. Neef (1986)

Neef's interest in the LXX has already been demonstrated in the text-critical notes in his monograph (1987), the revision of his doctoral thesis (1985), which has been reviewed above.

In this study, Neef attempts to describe the character of the LXX in detail. He thinks that the Hebrew text of Hosea is poor in many places. This seems to be why he maintains that the rendering of the LXX is especially significant. He compares the LXX with the MT under the three main headings: 1) Additions (196-199); 2) Omissions (199-200); and 3) Deviations (201-214).

This comparative study, Neef concludes, shows a great deal of deviation in both texts; deviation which has led scholars to various interpretations of the LXX.

Before reaching final assessment on the LXX of Hosea, Neef reviews the history of its interpretation. Four approaches are discussed:

- 1) A negative position represented by Treitel and Nyberg.
- 2) A positive position by Patterson.
- 3) An Aramaic *Vorlage* for the LXX by Vollers.
- 4) A corrupted *Vorlage* by von Orelli, Harper, Th. H. Robinson, and A/F.

On the basis of his study of both the LXX and the MT, Neef (217) emphasises that the intention of the LXX's interpretation (*Interpretationswille*) is clear, especially in the places where the LXX expands, improves, smooths out (*glättet*) and interprets on grounds of theology and content or syntax and style (without materially changing the meaning). So, Neef argues that for example, through the addition in 13:4, based on grounds of theology and content, the LXX attempts to state more clearly the relationship between Yahweh and Israel: the LXX praised Yahweh as the creator of heaven and earth comparing Yahweh with the unfaithful Israel. Similar cases occur in 2:25[23]; 6:1; 12:10[9]; 14:3[2]. And the rest of the additions of the LXX also clarify various aspects: war (1:7); the worship of Baal (2:10[8]); creation (2:14[12]; 4:3); Assyrian danger and deportation (8:13). The effort of the LXX to understand the text of the *Vorlage* is also apparent in the many syntax and style additions, for example, of objects, possessive pronouns, especially the frequent use of copula, etc., and revisions. Neef also emphasises that the additions made by the LXX to the *Vorlage* and its interpretation and clarification of the latter, without a change of material meaning, clearly indicates the great endeavour in the LXX to transmit/communicate the text conscientiously (*gewissenhaft*). Hence the great responsibility felt by the LXX to both its *Vorlage* and to its readers should rule out a negative evaluation, as in Treitel and Nyberg.

Although evaluating the deviations when the MT and LXX are materially different in meaning is, of course, difficult, Neef (218-219) suggests that in many cases they can be explained: they partly came from misreading or confusion of consonants (7:14; 9:3), or an adjustment to the context (13:10), or a deliberate interpretation (1:6; 8:10). As for the variations between the



MT and the LXX, which came from neither misreading, adjustment to the context nor deliberate interpretation, Neef (219) introduces two possible explanations: 1) LXX has arbitrarily rendered the *Vorlage* in many places, the interpretation especially favoured by Treitel and Nyberg. 2) LXX is vague and corrupt, and has in some places a completely different *Vorlage* from the present MT. This interpretation is most strongly supported by especially Patterson, Harper, and A/F. Neef favours the latter position rather than the former, since in many passages with material variants we notice, on retroversion into Hebrew, a similar consonantal basis.

As noted above, Neef's detailed work on the LXX of Hosea could be regarded as an extension to the studies of Vollers and Patterson, etc. In any case, to date, his study is one of the most useful in the understanding of the LXX and the MT of Hosea.

#### II.2.2.1.5 R. A. Kraft-E. Tov (1986)

The nature of the data base prepared by the CATSS project (Computer Assisted Tools for Septuagint Studies) co-directed by R. A. Kraft and E. Tov in Philadelphia and Jerusalem is detailed in 'A Computerized Data Base for Septuagint Studies'. Tov (2) describes the aim of the project:

The purpose of the larger data base is to provide data for all aspects of the study of the LXX: its language, grammar, translation technique, its relation to the MT and the reconstruction of elements in the Hebrew text from which the translation was made. The data base is meant to be flexible, that is, at each stage new type of information can either be inserted in or attached to it, and it can be used in many different ways for producing running texts, indices, concordances, analyses, etc.

The components of the larger data base are, in the words of Tov (2), as follows:

- 1) An alignment in parallel columns of all elements of the LXX and MT in such a way that each element in the LXX has its equivalent in the column of MT and vice versa. The Hebrew textual basis of this alignment consists of the following two parts: a) col. a of the Hebrew presenting the formal equivalents of the LXX and MT --- ; b) col. b of the Hebrew offering remarks on the Hebrew readings reflected in the translation which differ from MT.
- 2) The complete collection of variants culled from the published editions of either the Goettingen or Cambridge series.
- 3) A full morphological analysis of all words in the LXX.
- 4) A full morphological analysis of the Hebrew, needed for generating indices.

On the other hand, the more limited data base, Tov (4; 12) defines as containing 'only the alignment of the Hebrew and Greek main texts without variants and without their accompanying morphological analyses'; and the purpose of the data base is 'to record as precisely as possible the Greek-Hebrew equivalent of the LXX and MT'. At the same time, Tov (12) immediately lays emphasis on the limitations of the data base: 1) 'the data base does not provide answers to all questions in the study of the Septuagint or of its relations to the underlying Hebrew text'; 2) 'while col. a records mainly *objective* elements, col. b is primarily *subjective*.'

In spite of these limitations, this significant data base has advantages that cannot be ignored. In accessing such material on the completed data base, one can expect much information useful for an understanding of the LXX and the MT, as Tov (14) remarks:

Information collected from the complete data base forms the basis for new and more precise studies in the areas of the text-critical use of the LXX, its translation technique,



language and grammar. This information also aids in the analysis of exegesis and of the spiritual and intellectual world of the translators, but for that purpose the full context must be taken into consideration as well.

#### II.2.2.2. Vulgate

##### II.2.2.2.1 B. Kedar-Kopfstein (1974-1975)

This study on the Vulgate of Hosea is a part of Kedar Kopfstein's continued work on the Vulgate.<sup>3</sup> At the beginning of this article, Kedar-Kopfstein (henceforth K-K) remarks on the value of the Vulgate for textual criticism and notes that the variants between the *Vorlage* of Jerome (c. 400 C.E.) and the MT have not been shown fully in every critical apparatus. Hence in this study, he aims at detecting Hebrew text-forms that had existed, leaving evaluation to the commentators' judgment.

In his previous article, K-K (1969:37) noted that the Vulgate had a special importance for the textual criticism of the prophets:

The extreme variety of translation techniques employed by Jerome warrants a discriminative approach to the various sections of Vulgate. From the point of view of textual criticism the paraphrastic rendition of e.g. the Book of Esther cannot be invested with the weight of proof which the close rendering of the Hebrew Psalter possesses. As regards the prophets, Jerome on the whole aimed at giving a faithful rendition of the Hebrew. Therefore, here every textual deviation deserves our attention.

In Hosea's case especially, we can compare Jerome's translation (c. 392) with

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<sup>3</sup> Cf. Kedar-Kopfstein in the bibliography.

his commentary (c. 406), in which, K-K notes, Jerome is frequently dissatisfied with his own rendition.

As to the variants of the Vulgate of Hosea, K-K discusses them under the following four headings:

1) Sense-division: K-K appeals to two reliable witnesses: the syntactical structure of a Latin phrase and the *lemmata* given in Jerome's commentary. For example, in discussion of Hos 12-14, he adduces Vulgate 13:10, which reads *ubi est rex tuus maxime nunc salvet te* for the MT אֱהִי מֶלֶךְ אֲפֹא וְיִשְׁעֶךָ 'Where now is your king that he may save you?' Unlike Hebrew אֲפֹא, *maxime* belongs to the second clause. This either ignores or did not read -ו before וְיִשְׁעֶךָ.

2) Vocalization: K-K notes that Jerome frequently offered remarks on the perplexities arising from translation of an unvocalized text. For example, in Hos 13:14, the same consonants מָוֹת could be read as מָוֹת: *verbum* 'a word', or as מָוֹת: *mors* 'death'. Since Jerome was familiar with an authoritative Hebrew reading tradition, however, we can, according to K-K, assume that in the case of divergence where Vulgate is different from MT, it conforms to a divergent Hebrew tradition. In this category of 'Vocalization', K-K adduces, for example, Hos 12:4[3], in which Vulgate: *idolum* vocalized אֱלֹ as אֱלֹ 'idol' rather than אֱלֹ 'vigour, mankind' in the MT.

3) Grammatical variants: K-K (90) notes, for instance, in Hos 12:15[14], in the Vulgate: *in amaritudinibus suis* for תַּמְרוּרִים 'bitterness' (MT), 'the addition of the pron. suffix is unnecessary; we do not find it Jer 31:21 or



Lam 3:15. Thus we may feel inclined to assume the reading (ב)תמרוריו.'

4) Lexical variants: K-K posits the two causes of the lexical variants as in the Vulgate: 1) omissions and additions of letters in Jerome's *Vorlage* changed the whole word; and 2) a synonym has been substituted for the word in the MT. He illustrates a variant in Hos 13:6, in which the Vulgate: *et obliti sunt mei* read ושבחוני 'and they forgot me' for על כן שבחוני 'therefore they forgot me' in the MT.

K-K's study is, so far as I am aware, the only examination of the Vulgate's contribution which bears on the understanding of the nature and the MT of Hosea.

### II.2.3 Text-critical Analyses of the Book of Hosea by Commentators

#### II.2.3.1 J. Wellhausen (1898)

As has been seen above, Wellhausen's work on the Minor Prophets is one of the first critical analyses of their texts and version(s). His work is made up of two parts: the translation of the text of the Minor Prophets, and the notes on the text. His discussion in the notes is rather concise. For example, in the case of Hos 12-14, his brief notes on the text cover only pp. 128-134. Here it would be unreasonable to expect a detailed discussion on textual criticism. His judgments on the text are, however, clear and cautious, as with his other studies.

For a better understanding of the text of Hosea, Wellhausen frequently

refers to the LXX among other ancient versions. For example, in Hos 12-14, he accepted the readings of the LXX ten times,<sup>1</sup> while he rejected the LXX five times.<sup>2</sup>

Such a continual endeavour to reach to a better text was a foundation of his historical research. His study of the LXX seems to have provided both form and content for the work of later scholars, as the following discussion of Marti and Harper will show.

#### II.2.3.2 D. K. Marti (1904)

In the section 'The Origin of the Book of Hosea', Marti (10-11) seeks to demonstrate that the book had its origins in the eighth century northern kingdom, and was transmitted to the southern kingdom after its fall. During that process the original text of Hosea had naturally suffered through alterations and additions. Thus in many places it is difficult for us to identify its original form.

In relation to the corrupt text of Hosea, Marti pays high regard to the importance of the LXX:

Auch für Hosea, der vielleicht den verdorbensten Text im ganzen AT aufweist, ist es höchst wichtig, dass uns in der LXX das Zeugnis einer Textgestalt vorliegt, die weit über die Fixierung des masoretischen hebräischen Textes zurückreicht.

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<sup>1</sup> 12:2, 3, 9[1, 2, 8]; 13:5, 7, 9, 10; 14:3, 8 $\alpha$ , 9 $\alpha$ [2, 7 $\alpha$ , 8 $\alpha$ ].

<sup>2</sup> 12:5[4]; the long insertion of the LXX in 13:4, (on which Wellhausen noted that the LXX in 13:4, coming certainly from a Hebrew Vorlage, reminds us of the additions we can detect in Am 4:13; 5:8, 9; 9:5, 6. So, he regarded these passages as interpolations), 14; 14:3, 8[2, 7].



Marti, thus, also repeatedly resorted to the LXX to secure a better text. In Hos 12-14, he accepted the LXX nine times,<sup>3</sup> while he rejected the LXX seven times.<sup>4</sup> As has been noted above, his study of the LXX seems to have been affected by the work of Wellhausen: Marti mostly agreed with Wellhausen<sup>5</sup> except only in three cases.<sup>6</sup>

### II.2.3.3 W. R. Harper (1905a)

Harper (clxxiii-clxxviii), like Marti, presupposes, in his section 'Text and Versions of Amos and Hosea' that the text of Hosea is one of the most corrupt in the Old Testament, whilst the text of Amos, Hosea's contemporary, is as well preserved as perhaps any in the Hebrew Bible. Hence, after noting transpositions made in Hosea, he classified many types of error which he had identified in the MT under two major headings: 1) changes in vocalization; and 2) consonantal corrections.

This approach to the MT seems to have led Harper to attempt to recover a better text by appealing to ancient versions, amongst which Harper regarded the LXX highly:

In correction of MT, LXX is most helpful. That the textual basis of LXX is different from MT appears from the large number of cases in which the reading of LXX cannot have come from MT --- LXX's rendering was evidently made before

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<sup>3</sup> 12:2, 9[1, 8]; 13:5, 7 (καὶ εἶσομαι), 9, 10; 14:3 (καρπον), 8, 9[2, 7, 8].

<sup>4</sup> 12:3, 5, 10[2, 4, 9]; 13:4, 7 (Ἀσσυριων), 14; 14:3[2] (אלהיך after יהוה).

<sup>5</sup> 12:2, 5, 9, 10[1, 4, 8, 9]; 13:4, 5, 7 (καὶ εἶσομαι), 9, 10, 14; 14:3, 8, 9[2, 7, 8].

<sup>6</sup> 12:3[2]; 13:7; 14:8[7].

MT had become the standard text.

Thus, in Hos 12-14, Harper followed the LXX twelve times,<sup>7</sup> while he rejected the LXX twice.<sup>8</sup> As a result, he has generally been even more sympathetic to the LXX than Wellhausen and Marti. Harper's study of the LXX, however, like Marti's, appears to have been influenced by Wellhausen: Harper for the most time accepted Wellhausen,<sup>9</sup> while they disagreed with each other only in four instances.<sup>10</sup> However, Harper offered more detailed discussion on the textual criticism of Hosea than Wellhausen and Marti did.

#### II.2.3.4 H. S. Nyberg (1934)

As in the case of Marti and Harper, in the section 'The Old Testament Textual Criticism and the Problem of Textual Criticism', Nyberg (6) stated that he prefers LXX among ancient versions to MT, since in most cases the former retains a text older than the latter:

MT, der von Handschriften vertreten wird, welche frühestens in das Frühmittelalter hinaufreichen, ist die jüngste und schlechteste Form des Bibeltextes. Die alten Übersetzungen, vor allen die LXX, bieten eine ältere Textform, die in den meisten Fällen der masoretischen vorzuziehen ist. Die von jenen Übersetzungen vertretene Textform ist besser, weil sie zeitlich älter ist.

It is usually assumed that older manuscripts are more authentic than younger ones, since they are likely to have been less exposed to textual corruption

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<sup>7</sup> 12:2, 3, 9[1, 2, 8]; 13:4, 5, 7, 9, 10, 14; 14:3, 8, 9[2, 7, 8].

<sup>8</sup> 12:5, 10[4, 9].

<sup>9</sup> 12:2, 3, 5, 9, 10[1, 2, 4, 8, 9]; 13:5, 7, 9, 10; 14:8[7] (καὶ καθιούνται), 9[8].

<sup>10</sup> 13:4, 14; 14:3, 8[2, 7].



than the others. Thus in principle we can rely on old sources more than new ones, since the former may retain better readings than the latter.

Despite his positive evaluation of the LXX, in the case of the LXX of Hosea, Nyberg (116) is sceptical about the actual contribution of the LXX towards solving the text-critical problems in the MT of Hosea:

Die interpretation des LXX dagegen verstösst unaufhörlich gegen den Rhythmus, teilt den Text nicht selten verkehrt ab und strotzt von groben Missverständnissen, verunglückten Lesungen und oberflächlichen Wortdeutungen, die oft aufs Geratewohl nach naheliegenden aramäischen Wörtern zugeschnitten worden sind. *Hilflosigkeit und Willkür sind die charakteristischen Züge dieser Interpretation.* Die grammatischen und lexikalischen Kenntnisse der Übersetzer sind nicht hoch zu bewerten. (Italics mine)

His conclusion on the LXX is accordingly that 'Die masoretische Tradition der alexandrinischen Juden war recht mangelhaft'. However, Rudolph (1966:19) did not agree with Nyberg's negative assessment on the LXX: 'LXX, der wichtigsten der alten Übersetzungen, --- ist kein Allheilmittel ---, aber sie verdient auch nicht die Unterschätzung, mit der ihr z. B. Nyberg begegnet'. And recently Neef (1986:218) has also criticized Nyberg's interpretation of the LXX.

#### II.2.3.5 H. W. Wolff (1961a (German); 1974 (English))

Following the format of the series of the BKAT, Wolff's commentary on Hosea is composed under five headings: Text, Form, Ort (Setting), Wort (Interpretation), and Ziel (Aim). Under the heading of Text are included a translation and relatively extensive text-critical and philological notes, in

which Wolff refers to manuscripts (Hos 13:15; 14:4[3]b, etc.)<sup>11</sup> but mainly to ancient versions.

As in his other studies, Wolff's careful text-critical notes on each section of the commentary should be useful in interpreting the text.

#### II.2.3.6 W. Rudolph (1966)

At the beginning of his commentary Rudolph (19) described the text of Hosea as the most corrupt one in the whole Old Testament. This may explain why Rudolph gave much space to text-critical problems in his commentary.

For solving difficulties in the MT, Rudolph argues, it is necessary to listen to and fully examine ancient versions in order to assess whether their different renderings give a better text than the MT. In this connection, he regards the LXX as the most important of the ancient versions, but he is careful in evaluating the LXX, as quoted above.

As noted above, Rudolph (20ff.) often understood the linguistic peculiarities in the text of Hosea as 'Besonderheiten des nordisraelitischen Dialektes'.

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<sup>11</sup> As to the reproduction of Qumran texts from Hosea 1:7-2:5[3], etc. contained in the end-papers of the commentary of the American edition, Hasel (1977-1978:92) argued that Wolff should have discussed it in the respective passages of the commentary itself. It would have been difficult, however, for Wolff to refer to Allegro's discussion (1959), since Wolff's first edition of the commentary on Hosea was published in 1961 and the end-papers of the American edition (1974) have been provided by the editors of the series.



His theory may be helpful in understanding characteristics of Hosea's language, which would eventually be explained more clearly by increased knowledge of northern orthographic conventions and comparative linguistics.

The body of Rudolph's commentary is, according to the format of the series of the KAT, composed of three parts: a translation, textual and philological notes, and a verse-by-verse commentary. To date, his commentary has offered the most detailed textual and philological notes of any on Hosea. Every student of Hosea seems to have to give special attention to his carefully discussed textual notes.

#### II.2.3.7 F. I. Andersen-D. N. Freedman (1980)

A/F's approach to the text of Hosea (66-68) is, as stated above, generally conservative in the sense that they have much more respect for the MT than most German scholars would agree to. They accordingly resist most suggestions for emendation, since they think that better knowledge of ancient Hebrew, especially such grammatical phenomena as the broken construct chain and double-duty prepositions in the text of Hosea, provides a wider range of options for explaining the text.

As for the linguistic peculiarities in the text, as noted earlier, A/F argue that we should be able to solve the problem of Hosea's Samaritan dialect through reference to, and in the light of developing knowledge of epigraphic materials such as the Samaria Ostraca, and moreover, increased knowledge of comparable ancient languages, especially of Phoenician and Ugaritic.

With regard to the ancient versions, which are generally accepted as useful in the understanding of difficult biblical texts, A/F think the MT is better than all ancient versions, of which the LXX is the only one worth serious thought. However, their approach to the LXX is, as noted above, not positive.

All these variants on the text of Hosea seem to have led A/F to respect the MT more than any other, and to attempt to retain the received Hebrew text as faithfully as possible instead of resorting to textual emendation. However, it should be noted that not only the text of Hosea, but every biblical text, needs to be evaluated in order to recover a better text, if at all possible; every biblical text could have been corrupted to some extent through its long history of transmission.

In this respect, it can be noted that if A/F added a detailed textual criticism to their thorough literary analyses, which any student of Hosea should study carefully, their work on the text of Hosea would be much improved.

#### II.2.3.8 D. Stuart (1987)

As with the conventional view of the text of Hosea, Stuart (13) too regards it as having many textual problems, bearing comparison with the book of Job. He assumes that one of main reasons for the problems of the text is its northern origin, coming down to Judah, as it did, after the fall of the northern kingdom in 721 B.C.

As a result, in interpreting the text of Hosea, Stuart repeatedly refers to



the LXX of Hosea, and other versions:

Fortunately the Septuagint of Hosea is a quite literal, nonexpansionistic rendering of the unpointed Hebrew. This allows for helpful reconstruction of the original consonantal texts at many points, even when the Septuagint translation has failed to interpret its consonantal Hebrew *Vorlage* sensibly. An attention to the Septuagint renderings is therefore reflected throughout this commentary. The Syriac, Latin, and Aramaic versions, in that order of significance, are of occasional minor value in restoring the original Hebrew text.

His endeavour to solve textually problematic passages of Hosea on the basis of the major versions seems an approach worth noting in moving towards an understanding of the text. However, his discussion of textual criticism of Hosea needs to be treated more fully and carefully than he did in the textual notes (cf. 12:1[11:12]b; 13:5a; 14:4[3]b, etc.).<sup>12</sup>

#### II.2.4 Concluding Observations

In conclusion. In the light of the above review of the major literature on the text of Hosea, we can summarise as follows:

The few fragmentary texts of Hosea recovered from Qumran are too scarce to solve the textual problems of Hosea. In this regard, as has been shown in the above review of the literature on the textual criticism of Hosea, the LXX has been regarded as the most useful source of all. We feel, therefore, that the recovery of a better text of Hosea needs a greater concentration on the LXX, with the additional help of other manuscripts and ancient versions,

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<sup>12</sup> Cf. a review of Stuart's textual criticism on Hosea by Emmerson (*Book List*, 1989, p.62).

if they can be useful in weighing and evaluating the MT and the LXX. In this connection, it seems that A/F ought to have discussed the LXX as fully as the MT so that they may ascertain a better text for Hosea, and to have followed up their own remarks on the significance of the LXX as compared with other ancient versions for the text critical analyses of Hosea.

### II.3 Text-critical Analyses of Hosea 12-14

In this section, I will concentrate mainly on those parts of the text of Hosea 12-14 (MT) which seem to diverge significantly from that underlying the ancient versions. In this connection, as I have already noted above, our main business will be to compare the readings of the MT and LXX of Hosea 12-14. So far as I have been aware, the most useful material for the study of MT/LXX is the project of K/T (1986) which has already been noted above. Hence I will review their project, and then discuss it, where it seems to be necessary. A Hebrew retroversion from LXX will be presented in a column between LXX and MT, if these witnesses are significantly divergent from each other. The main biblical texts for this study are *BHS*; and the edition by Ziegler, *Septuaginta XIII: Duodecim Prophetæ*.

#### 12:1

Ἐκυκλωσε με εν ψευδει Εφραιμ  
και εν ασεβειαις οικος Ισραηλ  
και Ιουδα. νυν εγνω αυτους ο θεος,  
και λαος αγιος κεκλησεται θεου.

סבבני בבחש אפרים  
ובמרמה בית ישראל  
ויהורה עד רר עם אל  
ועם קדושים נאמן



### General Comments:

The MT in v1a seems to have the same Hebrew consonants and vocalization as the LXX's, while the two texts differ in their word-division and punctuation: the LXX appears to have divided the verse after וִיהוּדָה 'and Judah', while the MT after יִשְׂרָאֵל 'Israel'. Judah should be considered as the subject of the v1b on the basis of parallelism. On the other hand, Hos 12:1b is one of the most problematic passages in Hosea for translators and commentators mainly because of the difficulties in the textual witnesses. Here the retroversion in K/T is: וִיהוּדָה עַד יָדַעְם אֵל וְעַם קְרוּשִׁים נֹאמֵר; and they treat θεου 'God' at the end of the verse in the LXX as a plus.

### Detailed Comments:

νυν

עַד

K/T note that עַד 'still' is aligned in Hosea with ἕως 'until' (5:15; 7:4; 10:12); ἔτι 'yet' (12:10[9]); and πρὸς 'to' (14:2[1]), while νυν 'now' has every time been used for עַתָּה 'now' in Hosea.<sup>1</sup> The sole exception to this pattern is in Hos 12:1. And they find that νυν is never used for עַד elsewhere in the Old Testament. Thus, it seems that K/T might have proposed עַתָּה or עַתָּה as the *Vorlage* for νυν, not MT עַד. νυν followed by aorist εἶπεν is strange, while עַד in the MT has the support of Syr; Tar; and Vul (*testis*), at least as far as the consonants are concerned.

εἶπεν αὐτοῖς

יָדַעְם

עַד עַם

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<sup>1</sup> 2:9, 12[7, 10]; 4:16; 5:3, 7; 7:2; 8:8, 10, 13; 10:2, 3.

The root of the Hebrew רָר in the MT would presumably be רוּר 'to wander' in the light of the vocalization by the MT. On the other hand, the LXX  $\epsilon\gamma\upsilon\omega$   $\alpha\upsilon\tau\omicron\upsilon\varsigma$  apparently reflects יָרַעַם. If the *Vorlage* of the LXX is יָרַעַם, Hosea may here have employed one of his favourite terms יָרַעַ to describe Judah positively.

For the purpose of our better understanding of the Hebrew (רָר in the MT), we seem to have to discuss Hosea's attitude to Judah in 12:1b – did Hosea view Judah positively or negatively? Wolff (1974:210) and Emmerson (1984:114–115) argue that in the light of the structure of 12:1, 'Judah' in v1b is considered as positive in contrast to the negative 'Israel' of the northern kingdom in v1a. However, a wider review of evidence for Hosea's attitude to Judah (5:5, 12–14; 6:4, 10–11; 8:14; 10:11) and the Canaanite cults in Judah in the 8th century suggests that in Hosea's opinion Judah is as guilty as Israel.<sup>2</sup> Hence, the meaning of רָר attested in the MT is to be interpreted negatively. Neef (1987:20) notes that רוּר in Jer 2:31; Ps 55:3 also has a negative meaning, while its sense in Gen 27:40 is not certain (cf. A/F (602)). Accordingly, the positive interpretation of Judah by the LXX needs to be reconsidered. Moreover, as for the suffix ׀- in יָרַעַם, it is not clear whether it refers to either Israel or Judah or both. In any case, as far as the consonants are concerned, Syr, Tar (cf. Gelston (1987:123)) and Vul all attest the Hebrew preposition ׀ל in the MT. In the light of this interpretation, the Hebrew text used by the LXX may be corrupt or the Hebrew רָר may

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<sup>2</sup> So Ibn Ezra (1988:115); A/F (601); Neef (1987:19–20); Stuart (1987:189); Hubbard (1989:199), etc.



have puzzled the translator of the LXX. Hence we prefer to read the MT 77, although the meaning is not certain, on the basis of the *parallelismus membrorum*<sup>3</sup> of v1b $\alpha$  and v1b $\beta$  in the MT.<sup>4</sup> In 12:1b, the structural pattern is: abc//c'b':<sup>5</sup>

(c) אל-עם	(b) רר	(a) ויהודה ער
(c') עם-קדושים	(b') נאמן	
λαος αγιος --- θεου	עם קדושים	עם קדושים

The LXX vocalised עמ for עם in the MT. Syr and Tar support the LXX (cf. Gelston (1987:123)). On the other hand, Vul (*cum*) read the Hebrew as in the MT; and the above-noted *parallelismus membrorum* supports the MT.

The Hebrew קדושים in the MT has been interpreted as follows:

1) A plural of excellence (majesty) which expresses an intensification of the idea of the singular as in אלהים 'God' and קדושים 'the Holy One' in Pr 9:10; 30:3.<sup>6</sup> In this case, קדושים refers to Yahweh as the Holy One. קדושים in 12:1b $\beta$  does not seem to belong to this category, since the contrasting word pair in 12:1b is אל and קדושים, while the singular parallelism אל//קדוש is used in Hos 11:9.

2) A simple plural form referring either (a) to divine beings or (b) to earthly beings.

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<sup>3</sup> Gorden (1912:11-12) noted *parallelismus membrorum*: 'the parallelism of the individual members, or *stichoi*, of the verse'.

<sup>4</sup> So Wolff (1974:206); A/F (601); Neef (1987:16).

<sup>5</sup> For this type, see Watson (1984a:174-176).

<sup>6</sup> Cf. GKC (124h); and Davidson (1902:18).

As to the last possibility, we could assume that it referred to earthly pious people as in 2 Chr 35:3; Ps 16:3; Dan 7:27. Wolff (1974:210) supposes that קְרוּשִׁים in Hos 12:1 refers to earthly faithful people, since 12:1 is a prophetic oracle; so his interpretation is that the suffix of סַבְבִּנִי applies to Hosea, not Yahweh; קְרוּשִׁים is less likely to be a plural of majesty if we refer to the singular parallelism in קְרוּשׁ//אֵל in Hos 11:9. However, his interpretation is not appropriate, since 1) we suggest that 12:1 is a divine saying,<sup>7</sup> and thus the suffix of סַבְבִּנִי refers to Yahweh, not Hosea; 2) קְרוּשִׁים is parallel with אֵל, whether the parallelism is synonymous or antithetical.

Here if we return to the LXX ἅγιος --- θεοῦ in Hos 12:1, K/T note that the θεοῦ is an addition. Among other examples of the addition θεοῦ in the Old Testament they note Job 6:10b: קְרוּשׁ אֲמַרְי בְּחַרְתִּי 'for I have not denied the words of the Holy One'; οὐ γὰρ ἐψεύσαμην ῥήματα ἁγία θεοῦ μου. The θεοῦ in Job 6:10b as in Hos 12:1b may be a double rendering of קְרוּשׁ rather than a plus. The θεοῦ at the end of Hos 12:1 may derive from קְרוּשִׁים: the θεοῦ and the previous ἅγιος may be evidence that the Hebrew word has been rendered twice.

If, however, we interpret קְרוּשִׁים as divine beings, we may regard them as Yahweh's attendants of heavenly council, angels, the holy ones or the Canaanite pantheon, the false gods. If Judah is mentioned favourably, קְרוּשִׁים will refer to the former; while if unfavourably, it will refer to the latter. A/F (603) suppose that קְרוּשִׁים means gods in Ugaritic, Phoenician,

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<sup>7</sup> So Mays (1969:159-160); A/F (601); and Stuart (1987:188-189).



and biblical texts (Ps 16:3; 89:6, 8; Job 5:1; 15:15). Among the biblical texts, they suppose Job 15:15 is close to Hos 12:1: הן בקרשו לא יאמין ושמים לא זכו 'Behold, God puts no trust in his holy ones, and the heavens are not clean in his sight'. Since we consider Judah in 12:1b negatively, we render קרושים to 'the holy ones', referring to false gods.<sup>8</sup>

κακλεσται

נאמר

נאמן

The Greek κακλεσται 'they shall be called' seems to have read נאמר for נאמן 'he is faithful' in the MT. Perhaps the Greek could have been influenced by Hos 2:1[1:10]b: והיה במקום אשר יאמר להם לא עמי אתם יאמר להם 'and in the place where it was said to them, "You are not my people", it shall be said to them, "Sons of the living God"', in which יאמר as in Hos 12:1b (LXX) refers to the status of the people. Or the Greek in Hos 12:1b might have been affected by Is 4:3: והיה הנשאר בציון והגותר בירושלם קרוש 'And he who is left in Zion and remains in Jerusalem will be called holy, every one who has been recorded for life in Jerusalem', in which a similar view to Hos 12:1b can be noted, since these two verses have יאמר קרוש(ים) and refer to the status of the people. However, we prefer to read נאמן in the MT, which has the support of Syr (as far as the final consonant is concerned; cf. the retroversion in BHK); and Vul (*fidelis*).

In the light of the above interpretation of v1b, we seem to be able to render Hos 12:1b: 'and Judah still wanders with El and maintains faith with the holy ones.'

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<sup>8</sup> Cf. REB: 'the idols he counts holy'; A/F: 'the holy gods'.

12:2

πονηρον

רעה

The LXX πονηρον 'evil' has vocalized the consonants רעה as רעה, differently from רעה 'he herds' in the MT. As for the LXX, Ziegler (1943:123) comments: 'Sehr häufig setzt LXX ein Partizip oder ein Eigenschaftswort vor das Substantiv, und bewahrt so die Wortfolge der Vorlage, die allerdings hier ein Verbum (Partizip) oder einen anderen Ausdruck hat, der vom Übersetzer missverstanden wird'. The MT reading has the support of Vul (*pascit* - 'feeds').

ματαια

שוא

שר

The LXX ματαια 'deceit' probably read שוא for שר 'destruction'/'destroyer' in the MT. The latter is to be preferred: the theme stated in Hos 12:2 is that to pursue wealth and power apart from God is just like looking for an elusive wind, since these come from their deceit and violence (MT), which is similar to Hos 7:13, in which both שר and בזב occurs again: אוי להם כי נדרו 'Woe to them, for they have strayed from me! Destruction to them, for they have rebelled against me! I would redeem them, but they speak lies against me'. Hence, as noted by Hubbard (1989:200), בזב and שר may be understood as a hendiadys, violent deceit - falsehood leading to violence. Hoshea's policy of turning to Assyria and to Egypt 'adds lie to lie and invites destruction' (Mays 1969:161); at the same time these phenomena are reflected in the reference to Jacob in vv4-5, and repeated in vv8-14. The usage of שר with בזב (7:13; 12:2)



appears to be unique in Hosea, and even in the Old Testament. Vul (*vastitatem*) supports 𐤒𐤍 in the MT. The LXX *μαρα* may have been influenced by Hos 10:4; 12:12 in which 𐤍𐤒 occurs or by the passages<sup>9</sup> in which 𐤍𐤒 'deceit' and 𐤁𐤏 'lies' appear together.

12:4

κοποις

יִנְיָ

The Hebrew יִנְיָ in the MT does not seem to correspond to κοποις in the LXX, since the LXX apparently vocalized יִנְיָ as יִנְיָ 'evil' and not as יִנְיָ 'manhood' as in the MT. We prefer the MT in the light of the parallel 𐤏𐤁𐤁 'in the womb' (4a) // 𐤁𐤏𐤏 'in his manhood' (4b). Perhaps the LXX may have stemmed from the translator's theological interpretation which lays emphasis on Jacob's career of falsehood. K/T simply note that the LXX corresponds to the MT.

12:5

και ενισχυσε μετα αγγελου  
και ηδυνασθη  
εκλαυσαν και εδεθησαν μου,  
εν τω οικω Ων ευροσαν με,  
και εκει ελαληθη προς αυτον.

וישר אל מלאך  
ויכל  
בכה ויתחנן לו  
בית אל ימצאנו  
ושם ידבר עמנו

General Comments:

K/T note only one divergent reading from both texts: εν τω οικω Ων 'in the

<sup>9</sup> Ez 3:6-9; 21:34; 22:28; Pr 30:8.

house of On': **בֵּית אֵל** for **בֵּית אֵל** 'at Bethel' in the MT with the addition **עַל** in the LXX. However, this Hebrew text has widely been discussed in Old Testament scholarship. It hence seems to be necessary to review the arguments related to this verse and draw a conclusion on the consonantal text.

### Detailed Comments:

**καὶ ενισχυσας**

**וַיִּשָּׁר**

The LXX **καὶ ενισχυσας** 'and he strengthened' from **ενισχυσας**: 'to strengthen, gain strength' for **וַיִּשָּׁר** in **v5aα** is also used for **שָׁרָה** in **v4b**. The LXX in **v5aα** may have derived: **וַיִּשָּׁר** from **שָׁרָה** 'to strive'<sup>10</sup> for the MT **וַיִּשָּׁר** from **שָׁרָה** 'to rule'.<sup>11</sup> Rather **שָׁרָה** and **שָׁרָה** seem to be variant forms of the same root. In fact, in the Hebrew Bible there are very few occurrences whether of **שָׁרָה**,<sup>12</sup> or of **שָׁרָה**.<sup>13</sup> Within these cases, for example, the noun **מִשְׁרָה** in **Is 9:5f** certainly means 'rule', and is connected with **שָׁרָה שְׁלֹמֶה** in the same context.

**μετα**

**אֶל**

The LXX **μετα** 'with' corresponds to **אֶל** 'with' in the MT. However, the earliest scholar whom I have found to argue that **אֶל** should be revocalized to **אֶל** is Nyberg (1935:94-95). His argument is that Hosea demonstrates Jacob's

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<sup>10</sup> Cf. KB (1953:930); Mays (1969:161); Neef (1987:17).

<sup>11</sup> Cf. Gertner (1960:280-281); Wolff (1974:206, 212); Jeremias (1983:153).

<sup>12</sup> Mandelkern (1130-1131) lists the root **שָׁרָה**: **Gen 32:29**; **Lev 19:28**; **21:5** (x2); **Hos 12:4**; **Is 9:5, 6**; **Zach 12:3** (x2), while to these cases KB (930) add **Hos 12:5**.

<sup>13</sup> Mandelkern (1132) lists the root **שָׁרָה**: **Nu 16:13** (x2); **1Ch 15:12**; **Esth 1:22**; **Pr 8:16**; **Is 32:1**, while to these occurrences KB (933) and Lisowsky (1389) add **Jud 9:22**; **Hos 8:4**.



defeat, not his victory. The subject of the verbs in v5aa is the angel. His rendering of v5aa is, therefore, 'Und das Numen, der Engel, kämpfte und siegte. Er weinte und flehte um Erbarmen'. Nyberg's revocalization of לָאֵל to לָאֵל was accepted by Gertner (1960:277); Wolff (1974:206, 212); Holladay (1966:56); and McKenzie (1986:313). They have further suggested that there is a word play on the name 'Israel'. However, it seems to be difficult to accept their reading of לָאֵל as לָאֵל without any textual evidence. Rather לָאֵל in the MT has the support of LXX (μῆτα); Tar (מַעַל); and Vul (*ad*).

εκλαυσαν

הָבַב

The LXX εκλαυσαν 'they wept' (literally בָּבַב) does not appear to correspond to הָבַב 'he wept' in the MT because of their different number. However, we can assume that the translator could have opted for a Greek plural even though he found הָבַב as in the MT. K/T simply align הָבַב in the MT with εκλαυσαν.

As for the LXX, Gertner (1960:273, 281-82) supposed that the plural rendering of the LXX came from an attempt to avoid psychological inconsistency: one and the same person who had power over an angel would not weep and supplicate him. Thus, the LXX assumes different subjects: *he* prevailed, *they* wept and entreated. However, as Gertner indicated, the psychological problem is not solved yet. He hence argues that only in the original version does the prophet relate the entire story of Jacob. We can, however, note that we cannot easily reconstruct an original version of the sort which Gertner supposed. And we are not sure whether the LXX came from solving the psychological problem as Gertner assumed. Certainly

בכה in the MT has the support of Tar (בבא) and Vul (*flevit*).

μου

לו

As K/T note, לו 'to him' is aligned with μου 'to me' in Hos 12:5. The LXX seems to have read לי 'to me'. In fact K/T note αὐτω: לו for לי in the MT in 12:9. The reading לו in 12:5 has the support of Vul (*eum*).

εν τω οικω Ων

בית און

בית אל

The LXX εν τω οικω Ων 'in the house of On' seems to have read בית און for בית אל 'at Bethel' in the MT.

Nyberg (1935:94-96) regarded בית אל of the MT as a god: the subject of the verb in v5bα was the god Bethel, who found Jacob weeping. He hence assumed the difference in the story of the Jacob tradition between Hosea and Genesis to be an example of the fact that 'die Patriarchen-Erzählungen der Genesis vorprophetischen und ausserprophetischen Ursprungs sind und einem kanaanäisch-jahvistischen Synkretismus entsprangen'. Ginsberg (1961:344f.) and Good (1966a:146) have a similar view to Nyberg's. However, it should be noted that Bethel is not the subject in v5bα but adverbial, in the light of the clear parallelism of Bethel with עשׂ and the fact that here is no other reference to the god Bethel in Hosea. As far as this issue is concerned, the LXX (εν τω οικω Ων) and Vul (*in Bethel*) also support the idea that Bethel is not a name of god but of a place.

As for the LXX Ων, scholars' points of view can be represented as follows:



1) Ziegler (1943:130) regarded  $\text{בֵּית אֵן}$  as the original reading in Hos 12:5, since the LXX also offers  $\tau\omega \alpha\iota\kappa\omega \Omega\nu$  for the MT  $\text{בֵּית אֵן}$  in Hos 4:15; 5:8; 10:5, 8.

2) Wolff (1974:206) suggests, based on Ziegler's support of the LXX, two possibilities: either LXX has harmonized v5 with the previous passages in Hos 4:15; 5:8; 10:5, 8, in which LXX read  $\Omega\nu$  or MT later changed the original reading only in 12:5.

3) K/T note that  $\text{בֵּית אֵל}$  is always aligned with  $\text{Βαῖθηλ}$  in the Old Testament but for four exceptions: in Jud 9:46 ( $\alpha\iota\kappa\omicron\upsilon \tau\omicron\upsilon \text{Βααλ}$ :  $\text{בֵּית בַּעַל}$ ); Hos 10:15 ( $\alpha\iota\kappa\omicron\varsigma \tau\omicron\upsilon \text{Ισραηλ}$ :  $\text{בֵּית יִשְׂרָאֵל}$ ); Hos 12:5; Am 5:6 ( $\tau\omega \alpha\iota\kappa\omega \text{Ισραηλ}$ :  $\text{בֵּית יִשְׂרָאֵל}$ ).

In the case of Hos 12:5, if the reading of the LXX  $\Omega\nu$  is original, we must suppose that Hosea did not know the Bethel story in a form similar to the Jacob tradition reported in Gen 28:11–22; 35:6–15. Rather I prefer to argue either that the LXX reflects the context around the passage, or that the translator could have thought of the Egyptian city of On or Heliopolis from  $\text{בֵּית אֵן}$  'Beth-aven' (4:15; 5:8; 10:5);  $\text{בִּמְוֹת אֵן}$  'the high places of Aven' (10:8); and  $\text{בֵּית אֵל}$  'Bethel' (12:5). A similar comment on  $\text{בֵּית אֵן}$  in Hos 4:15 can be seen in Muraoka (1983:55):

The translator is well aware that he is bringing the Israelites far to the south by adapting his translation to his Egyptian *Sitz im Leben*; he does so in the interest of his readers, Jews in the Egyptian diaspora. Likewise in 5:8; 10:5, 8; 12:5[4]; Am 1:5.

$\text{בֵּית אֵל}$  in the MT has the support of Vul (*Bethel*) and Tar ( $\text{בֵּית אֵל}$ ).

Whenever  $\mu\epsilon$  occurs in the LXX in Hosea (2:18[16]; 3:1; 5:15; 6:11; 7:1, 7, 14; 12:1[11:12]), K/T note that  $\mu\epsilon$  corresponds to '–. Hos 12:5 is the unique exception. The translator may, as in the case of  $\text{בנה} - \epsilon\kappa\lambda\alpha\upsilon\sigma\alpha\nu$  above, have deliberately chosen to render  $\epsilon\upsilon\rho\omicron\sigma\alpha\nu \mu\epsilon$  'they found me' even if he found  $\text{מֵצָאוֹ}$  'he found him' as in the MT.

$\pi\rho\omicron\varsigma \alpha\upsilon\tau\omicron\nu$

$\text{עִמָּנוּ}$

The subject of  $\text{יָרַב} \text{'he spoke'}$  is generally recognized as God, while the main point of the scholars' wide debate in v5b $\beta$  is on the uncertain meaning of the suffix in  $\text{עִמָּנוּ}$  in the MT: whether it is 3 s m: 'with him' or 1 pl c: 'with us'.

One of the main arguments for the latter interpretation is that it maintains a continuity of reference – a theological significance: Hosea makes what was said to his ancestor Jacob apply to himself and his contemporaries, the descendants of Jacob. Moreover, as Holladay (1966:62) noted, if we read the suffix of  $\text{מֵצָאוֹ}$  3 s m: 'he found him', the reading of  $\text{עִמָּנוּ}$  as 1 pl c: 'with us' is the *lectio difficilior*.

On the above arguments for the reading of the suffix of  $\text{עִמָּנוּ}$  in the MT as 1 pl c, we can offer the following comments:

- 1) As to Holladay's application of the rule of the *lectio difficilior* to the suffix in  $\text{עִמָּנוּ}$ , it seems to be difficult to apply it here, since it is natural to connect the suffix in  $\text{עִמָּנוּ}$  with that of the neighbouring  $\text{מֵצָאוֹ}$ .



2) The LXX  $\pi\rho\omicron\varsigma\ \alpha\upsilon\tau\omicron\nu$  'to him' appears to have read the suffix in  $\text{עִמּוֹ}$  as 3 s m rather than 1 pl c; K/T offer no comment. We may not need to emend the Hebrew  $\text{עִמּוֹ}$  to  $\text{עִמּוֹ}$  on the basis of the LXX, since the 3 m s form of the preposition  $\text{עִמּוֹ}$ :  $\text{עִמּוֹ}$  'with him' (from  $\text{עִמְּן-הוּא}$ ) is attested in Ugaritic, as noted by Dahood (1965:32).<sup>14</sup>

The Ugar. form with affixed  $\text{-ן}$ , namely  $\text{עִמְּן}$ , may serve to explain the morphology of Hos 12:5,  $\text{וַיִּשֶׁם יְרֵבְרָם עִמּוֹ}$ . The sense desiderated is, 'And there he spoke with him', but to achieve this, the customary emendation to  $\text{עִמּוֹ}$  is not necessary; parse cons.  $\text{עִמּוֹ}$  as prep.  $\text{עִמְּן}$  followed by third sing. suffix. Hence point  $\text{עִמְּנוֹ}$ , 'with him', from  $\text{עִמְּן-הוּא}$ .

We might thus suppose that the MT  $\text{עִמּוֹ}$  reflects an alternative form of the preposition 'with'.

In the light of the analyses of the text of Hos 12:5, we seem to be able to read the verse as in the MT without emendation; and render it: 'he contended with an angel and prevailed; he wept and sought his favour; at Bethel he used to meet him, and there he would speak to him'.

## 12:6

$\epsilon\sigma\tau\alpha\iota$

יְהוָה

יְהוָה

The LXX  $\epsilon\sigma\tau\alpha\iota$  'it shall be' appears to have read יְהוָה for יְהוָה 'Yahweh' in the MT. According to K/T, the transposition of  $\text{ו/י}$  occurs four other times in Hosea: in 9:13  $\tau\alpha\ \tau\epsilon\kappa\nu\alpha\ \alpha\upsilon\tau\omega\nu$  'their children': בְּנֵיהֶם for בְּנוֹתָם 'in a meadow' in

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<sup>14</sup> Dahood is followed by Kuhnigk (1974:146); and A/F (615).





## 12:9

οι πονοι αυτου --- αυτω

יָגִיעִי --- לִי

K/T note that יָגִיעִי 'my riches' in the MT is aligned with οι πονοι αυτου 'his gains/labours', and that the Hebrew for the LXX αυτω is לוֹ for לִי in the MT. According to them, the transposition of ' / ו occurs three other times in Hosea: in 13:2: θυσσατε 'sacrifice': וְזָבַח for וְזָבַח 'those who sacrifice' in the MT (cf. see further below); 14:8[7]: και καθιουνται 'they shall dwell': יָשָׁבוּ for יָשָׁבוּ 'those who dwell'; 14:9 αυτω: לוֹ 'to him' for לִי 'to me'. The LXX (πονοι αυτου --- αυτω) in Hos 12:9b seems to have come from the translator's view that v9b is an announcement of the punishment of the sin in vv8-9a. Verse 9b, however, appears to be a continuation of the speech of Ephraim in v9a, since there is no trace of a change to the punishment until at the end of v9. Vul (*omnes labores mei non invenient mihi iniquitatem quam peccavi*) seems to support the MT.

## 12:10

ανηγαγον σε

K/T treat the LXX ανηγαγον σε 'I brought you up': הֵעֲלִיתִיךָ as a plus, which is, according to them, unique in the Old Testament. The Hebrew אֲשֶׁר הוֹצֵאתִיךָ 'who brought you out' is attested in Syr and Tar. We, however, prefer the reading וְאֲנִי יְהוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ מֵאֶרֶץ מִצְרַיִם 'I am Yahweh your God from the land of Egypt' in v10a in the MT, since it is repeated in Hos 13:4a. Vul (*et ego Dominus Deus tuus ex terra Aegypti*) supports the MT in both Hos

12:10a and Hos 13:4a. Hence the shorter text of MT is superior to LXX, Syr and Tar. Recently Hoffman (1989:172) noted: 'The MT is preferable since these versions probably altered the original text under influence from the present phrasing of the Decalogue. Indeed, the LXX adds here also a long doxology.'

## 12:11

ωμσωθην

ארמה

K/T note ארמה (lit. 'I compared'/'I made comparisons' > 'I gave parables') in the MT is aligned with ωμσωθην σε. However, σε is not attested in Ziegler's text, and there is no note on σε in his critical apparatus. It hence seems that σε should be deleted from their text. According to Gelston (1987:123), LXX, Syr, and Vul vocalized ארמה as אַרְמָה (hitp - cf. Is 14:14) for the MT's piel (אַרְמָה) (cf. רמה I in KB). The chiastic structure of v11 suggests the piel vocalisation: אַרְמָה // וְרַבְרָתִי (cf. A/F 618). 12:11b may thus be rendered: 'Through the prophets I gave parables'.

## 12:12

μη --- εστιν

אין

און

The LXX μη --- εστιν 'it does not exist' appears to have read אין for און 'evil' in the MT.

However, Neef (1987:197, 201) supposes that εστιν is an addition, and that און is rendered by μη, but K/T suggest that the LXX μη --- εστιν represents



אֵין for אֵון in the MT. The transposition of ו/י had often happened in LXX, as noted above on 12:6. In this connection the LXX ἡ --- στυν seems to have come from the translator's confusion of ו/י, since in 6:8 both גלעד and אֵון occur together: גלעד קרית פעלי און עקבה מרם 'Gilead is a city of evildoers, tracked with blood'. Vul (*idolum*) appears to support אֵון in the MT.

αρχοντες

שרים

שורים

The LXX αρχοντες 'princes' appears to have read שרים for שורים 'bulls' in the MT. No plural form שָׁנִים of שֹׁר in the MT is elsewhere found, while שֹׁר occurs frequently in the Old Testament. For example, שֹׁר appears eight times in Hosea (MT) (3:4; 5:10; 7:3, 5, 16; 8:10; 9:15; 13:10). In this connection, the LXX αρχοντες seems to have read the more familiar Hebrew שרים rather than שורים in the MT.

On the other hand, several interpreters have preferred to emend שורים in the MT:

1) A case of haplography: the view that the preposition ל has been lost before שורים under the influence of the preceding בגלגל 'in Gilgal' has been adopted by JB; NJB; NAB; NEB; and A/F. In the case of A/F (620), they suppose that שורים is a god rather than a sacrifice on the basis of v12b. Hence, their rendering is 'They sacrificed to bulls'. Emmerson (1984:142; 195, n 110), however, objects to this emendation mainly because no evidence can be produced to associate calf images with Gilgal. The images are connected only with the sanctuaries at Bethel and Dan (1 Kgs 12:28-29).

Hence she prefers the renderings of Wolff and Mays: 'In Gilgal they sacrifice(d) bullocks/steers'.

2) Another approach to שורים is that שורים is a corruption of לשורים as a result of haplography of ל and the confusion of ר/ר, as was proposed, for example, by Harper (1905a:clxxvi-vii). The main issue here is on the worship of demons. Driver (1938:163) objects to this emendation, since Hosea has been interested in indigenous cults more than foreign cults.

We prefer to render בגלגל שורים זבח: 'In Gilgal they sacrificed bulls', with Wolff, Mays, and Emmerson. They have the support of Syr; and Tar (תורים); cf. Vul (*bubus* - 'to bulls').

### 13:1

Κατα τον λογον Εφραιμ  
δικαιωματα αυτος ελαβεν  
εν τω Ισραηλ  
και εθετο αυτα τη Βααλ  
και απεθανε.

כדבר אפרים  
רתת נשא הוא  
בישראל  
ויאשם בבעל  
וימת

δικαιωματα                      תרת                      רתת

The main difficulty over Hos 13:1a in the MT is due to the Hebrew רתת 'trembling', which is *hapax legomenon* in the Hebrew Bible and falls under asterisk. The rare Hebrew has led scholars to look for a more original form of the saying. For example, as to the Hebrew behind the LXX δικαιωματα 'acts of justification' (Liddell/Scott), BHS supposed תורות; and Wolff (1974:219) assumed תרת. K/T note that the LXX δικαιωματα might have read תרת for רתת in the MT. However, Rudolph (1966:237) doubts



their supposed Hebrew, since, according to him, LXX had never read *δικαιώματα* for תרת. So, he opts for rendering תרת as 'stammelnd' following the Aramaic verb תרת 'to stammer', which however seems to be out of context in Hos 13:1. We prefer תרת in the MT for the following grounds:

- 1) According to Wolff (1974:219), the same meaning as תרת in the MT is found in 1QH 4:33; א' (φρικην); σ'θ' (τρομον); Syr; Vul (*horror*); and Tar (רתיתא).
- 2) The LXX's reading of תרת seems to have made it the object of the following verb נשן: *δικαιώματα αὐτοῦ εἶλεν* 'he adopted acts of justification'. However, the division between תרת and נשן as in the MT is metrically preferable.
- 3) The MT has the support of the context in Hos 13:1, which will be discussed in detail later.

If the translator had read תרת for תרת in the MT, תרת will have resulted from metathesis.

καὶ ἐθετο αὐτὰ

וַיִּשָּׂא

The Hebrew root וַיִּשָּׂא 'to become guilty' occurs five times in the MT in Hosea: 4:15 וַיִּשָּׂא 'he becomes guilty' (αἰγνοῖ lit. 'he is ignorant' > 'he goes wrong' or 'he becomes guilty'); 5:15 וַיִּשָּׂאוּ 'they bear their guilt' (ἀφανισθῶσιν 'they shall disappear' or 'they are destroyed'); 10:2 וַיִּשָּׂאוּ 'they bear their guilt' (ἀφανισθῶσονται 'they shall be destroyed'); 13:1 וַיִּשָּׂא 'and he became guilty' (καὶ ἐθετο αὐτὰ 'and he established them'); and 14:1[13:16] וַיִּשָּׂא 'she shall become guilty' (ἀφανισθῆσεται 'she shall be destroyed'). The correspondences in the LXX to וַיִּשָּׂא (MT) can be arranged as follows:

1) The LXX in 4:15 seems to have read the same Hebrew as in the MT.

2) With regard to the LXX in 5:15; 10:2; 14:1, Wolff (1974:222) supposed that the LXX in 14:1 misread  $\text{דָּשָׁן}$  'she shall be desolated' as in 5:15; 10:2, while K/T note that in the three passages (5:15; 10:2; 14:1), the LXX reflected an etymological exegesis derived from  $\text{דָּשַׁן}$  'to be desolated/deserted'. Rather the LXX may have read the same root  $\text{דָּשַׁן}$  as in the MT, and interpreted it theologically, since the term in Hosea has a double meaning: 'to become guilty' or 'to become punishable' as a result of guilt. In the light of context, the latter connotation is appropriate in 5:15; 10:2; 14:1.

3) K/T note that the LXX  $\kappa\alpha\iota\ \epsilon\theta\epsilon\tau\omicron\ \alpha\upsilon\tau\alpha$  'and he established them' corresponds to  $\text{וַיִּשָּׁן}$  in 13:1. However, in the light of  $\alpha\upsilon\tau\alpha$  the LXX seems to have read  $\text{וַיִּשְׁמֵם}$  for  $\text{וַיִּשָּׁן}$  'and he became guilty' in the MT. In this case the LXX could have been influenced by the translator's rendering of  $\text{תָּרַת/תָּרַת}$  by  $\delta\iota\kappa\alpha\iota\omega\mu\alpha\tau\alpha$  in 13:1a.

$\tau\eta\ \beta\alpha\alpha\lambda$

$\text{בַּבֶּעַל}$

The feminine article before Baal  $\tau\eta\ \beta\alpha\alpha\lambda$  occurs in the LXX for  $\text{בַּבֶּעַל}$  in the MT. The Greek ( $\tau\eta\ \beta\alpha\alpha\lambda$ ) does not appear in the Pentateuch, but in Former Prophets it occurs in Jud 2:13; 2 Kgs 1:2, 3, 6, 16; 21:3; in Latter Prophets only in Jer 2:8, 28; 7:9; 11:13, 17; 12:16; 19:5; 23:27; 32(LXX:39):29, 35; Hos 2:10[8]; 13:1. Wolff (1974:31) commented on the Greek: 'The feminine article before  $\beta\alpha\alpha\lambda$  at a later period indicates that it was pictured as a cow (Tob 1:5:  $\tau\eta\ \beta\alpha\alpha\lambda\ \tau\eta\ \delta\alpha\mu\alpha\lambda\epsilon\iota$ ), but originally it intended that this word be read



as "disgrace"<sup>1</sup> (ἡ αἰσχυνή); and K/T note that τη βααλ is aligned with בבעל in the MT. In the light of this interpretation, τη βααλ appears to support the reading of בבעל in the MT in Hos 13:1.

### 13:2

Θυσιατε

זבחן

זבח'

The LXX Θυσιατε 'sacrifice' seems to have read זבחן for זבח' 'those who sacrifice' in the MT. If the LXX is the original form of the saying, זבח' in the MT could have happened through the easy confusion of ו/י in the square script.<sup>2</sup> The LXX has the support of Vul (*immolate*).

On the other hand, there are those who attempt to keep the MT זבח', among whom the following can be represented:

1) NEB rendered Hos 13:2c: **ישקון עגלים ארם זבח' אמרים להם הם** 'Men say of them, "Those who kiss calf-images offer human sacrifice"'. The main problem of the rendering is, as Emmerson (1984:146) noted, that according to the rendering itself, it is not clear to whom the **ארם** refers. In a common interpretation of v2, the pronoun **הם** is the subject of the following verb **אמרים**, and more precisely, refers to the worshippers of idols. If the rendering of the pronoun is not clear, the saying of the text concerning the offering of human sacrifice can be understood as a rumour without evidence.

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<sup>1</sup> Cf. the use of **בשת** 'shamefulness' as an euphemism for **בעל** in the Hebrew Bible, e.g., in Hos 9:10; Jer 3:24; 11:13.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. above on 12:9.

In this case, not only the meaning of v2c but also the interpretation of vv1-3 becomes ambiguous, and even distorted, since the accusation of Ephraim's sin, following Yahweh's proclamation of the punishment of the sin should be based on a clear evidence: the sin of the idolatry and human sacrifice.

2) The rendering of the verse by Wolff is: 'They say to themselves: "Those who sacrifice men kiss calves"'. As for the rendering of the pronoun, Wolff noted that he relied on Hos 7:2a: **וְלֹא יִשְׁמְרוּ לְלִבָּם** literally 'they do not speak to their heart'. However, to this rendering, Emmerson (1984:147) objects due mainly to 'the improbability that the prophet would dismiss with such brevity so grave a perversion of the legitimate means of approach to God as the offering of human sacrifice'.

3) Finally in the case of A/F, their translation is: 'Those who sacrifice people speak to them. They kiss the calves'. As for the meaning of **וְלֹא יִשְׁמְרוּ** in Hos 13:2, A/F (632) appeal to **וְלֹא יִשְׁמְרוּ** in Ps 106:28b, where they prefer to read **מֵתִים**: 'human beings' rather than 'the dead' as in the MT (and RSV), since 'dead persons do not offer sacrifices, and **וְלֹא יִשְׁמְרוּ** means "to slay", it is impossible for the victims to be "dead men"'. They then regard **וְלֹא יִשְׁמְרוּ** (Hos 13:2c) and **וְלֹא יִשְׁמְרוּ** (Ps 106:28b) as synonyms.

These renderings of the NEB, Wolff, and A/F all suppose human sacrifice in the northern kingdom. However, as Emmerson (1984:149-150) and Heider (1985:310-316) discussed, there is no clear evidence from the biblical passage for the practice of human sacrifice in the northern kingdom.



Since it is difficult to accept the last three interpretations of זבח' in the MT, we seem to have to choose the first approach noted above and accept the LXX's testimony of Θυσιατε: זבח' for זבח' in the MT. In this case the Hebrew text in Hos 13:2c would be להם הם אמרים זבח' אדם עגלים ישקון, which can be rendered: "To them", they say, "make sacrifice". Humans kiss calves'.

### 13:4

στερεων ουρανον και κτιζων γην, ου αι χειρες εκτισαν πασαν την στρατιαν του ουρανου, και ου παρεδειξα σοι αυτα του πορευεσθαι οπισω αυτων και εγω ανηγαγον σε --- 'who establishes the heaven and creates the earth, whose hands created the whole host of heaven, but I have not shown these to you that you should follow them, and I it was who brought you ---.'

This LXX-plus appears between אלהיך 'your God' and מארץ 'from the land of' in the MT, since the Hebrew in the MT in 13:4a: ואנכי יהוה אלהיך מארץ מצרים 'I am Yahweh your God from the land of Egypt' occurs again in 12:10[9]a; and these two verses in the MT have the support of Vul. In the light of this, the Greek seems to have been inserted in 13:4a for a theological reason. Neef (1987:100) similarly noted: 'Die LXX bietet hier einen umfangreichen Einschub: ---; der erste Teil dieser Interpolation verherrlicht die Schöpfermacht Jahwes, der zweite kritisiert das abtrünnige Verhalten Israels'.

### 13:5

εγω επομαινον σε                      רעתִיך                      ירעתִיך

Gelston (1987:126) notes that in Hosea, among the evidence for a consonantal *Vorlage* different from MT, three variants seemingly

presupposed by the Peshitta in common with both LXX and Targum are attested in Hos 11:3 (קחם for וּאֶקְחֵם); 13:5 (רַעֲתִיךָ for רַעֲתִיךָ), 10 (אֶהֱיָא for אֶהֱיָא). Of these, Vul agrees with the other versions in 11:3; 13:10, while in 13:5 the Vul *ego cognovi te* reproduces the MT. The readings of the versions in 11:3; 13:10 are generally followed by scholars; but opinions are split on the correct reading in 13:5. For example, Wolff (1974:220) prefers the reading of the LXX: we may assume the misreading of רַעֲתִיךָ as רַעֲתִיךָ influenced by רַעֲתִיךָ in v4b and the dittography of the second ' from the previous אֶהֱיָא. On the other hand, A/F (634) notes that רַעֲתִיךָ in v5a in the versions appears to be affected by the Hebrew כִּמְרַעֲתֵם in v6a. Hence at the present time it seems to be not possible to decide which reading would be a correct one. This question will be discussed in the structural criticism below.

αοικητω

תלאבות

K/T note that the LXX αοικητω 'uninhabited' read לא בֵּית for תלאבות 'drought' in the MT; and Tov (1979:138) has already supposed a possibility of the Hebrew לא בֵּית for the LXX αοικητω, since elsewhere the privative α - represents לא and οικ - represents בֵּית. In this case we should assume the interchange or confusion of ו/י and at the same time the separation of one word of the MT into two words of the *Vorlage* for the LXX: לא בֵּית for תלאבות. Rather the rarity of the *hapax legomenon* תלאבות in the MT may have had an influence on the translator: the Hebrew may have puzzled him; and he may thus have rendered תלאבות in the MT to αοικητω according to the context.



The LXX κατα τας νομας αυτων 'According to their pastures' seems to correspond to במרעיתם 'according to their pasture' in the MT. On the other hand, A/F (633- 635) resort to emendation: כמו רעיתים 'when I fed them', which appears to have read the Syr (literally ורעיתים). Their two main arguments for the emendation are as follows:

1) In the light of the style and structure of v6, על בן שכחוני 'therefore they forgot me' cannot be joined simply with vv4-5, since the address changes from second to third person after v5. Verse 6 hence does not belong to an oracle of judgment. However, changes of style are not uncommon in Hosea; and the contrast between רע and שכח in vv4-6 is paralleled elsewhere in Hosea.

2) In the context of v6, this verse emphasizes Yahweh's saving act of providing food miraculously in the barrenness of the wilderness. The story thus properly begins with כמו רעיתים 'when I fed them' rather than במרעיתם 'according to their pasture' in the MT. However, the MT seems to lay more stress on Ephraim's self satisfaction than on Yahweh's saving act (which of course we can not exclude entirely) through the fivefold use of 3 pl m in v6, which can be rendered literally: 'According to *their* pasture, *they* were filled; *they* were filled, and *their* heart was exalted; therefore *they* forgot me'. במרעיתם in the MT and κατα τας νομας αυτων in the LXX have the support of Vul (*iuxta pascua sua*).

# 13:7

καὶ εἶσομαι

וְנִהְיֶה

K/T note that the LXX καὶ εἶσομαι 'and I will be' corresponds to 'וְנִהְיֶה' 'I have been' in the MT in Hos 13:7; Ez 11:16. On the other hand, BHK; BHS; NAB; NEB; REB, etc. suppose וְנִהְיֶה for καὶ εἶσομαι in Hos 13:7. If K/T's Hebrew (וְנִהְיֶה) be right, we can assume that the translator had the same Hebrew וְנִהְיֶה as in the MT, but regarded it corrupt and hence read וְנִהְיֶה in his mind, since his reading harmonizes the imperfect waw-consecutive of the narrative tense from v6 with the following imperfect forms in v8. The LXX has the support of Vul (*et ero*). On the other hand, Syr and Tar reproduce the MT. It seems that we can follow the LXX rather than the MT in the light of the structural analysis in v7; since v6 states Yahweh's indictment of Israel's sin, while vv7-8 proclaims his threat of the punishment.

Assυρων

אֲשׁוּר

אֲשׁוּר

As for the LXX Assυρων 'Assyrians' in 13:7, the vocalization of its *Vorlage* differs from the MT's: אֲשׁוּר 'Assyria' for אֲשׁוּר 'I will lurk' in the MT. The vocalization in the MT is possible. However, the reading of the LXX seems to be clearer than the MT's: the LXX anticipates שם 'there' in v8b more concretely than the MT. In this connection we can note Hos 5:13b-14a, in which we can also see אֲשׁוּר 'Assyria' and שחל 'a lion' in proximity as in Hos 13:7: וילך אפרים אל אֲשׁוּר וישלח אל מלך ירב והוא לא יוכל. Then Ephraim went to אֲשׁוּר and sent to the king of Yarb and he was unable to do so.



Assyria, and sent to the Great King. But he has no power to cure you or heal your sores. For I will be like a lion to Ephraim'.

In the light of these analyses, we prefer to read 'Assyria' of LXX, Syr, Vul in Hos 13:7, with Wellhausen, Harper, and Neef.

### 13:8

καὶ καταφαγονταὶ αὐτούς

וְאֶכְלָם

The LXX καὶ καταφαγονταὶ αὐτούς 'and they shall devour them' seems to have vocalized וְאֶכְלָם 'and I will devour them' in the MT differently: either וְאֶכְלָם or וְאֶכְלָם for וְאֶכְלָם in the MT in the light of K/T's note: the LXX καὶ καταφαγονταὶ αὐτούς corresponds to the reading וְאֶכְלָם in Ob 18b (MT). In this sense the LXX might have come from the translator's view that Yahweh himself could not devour his prey. However, the image of wild animals as Yahweh's instruments of judgment can easily be seen not only in Hosea (2:14, 20[12, 18]; 13:8), but also elsewhere as in Na 2:12-13; and the image of the lion in Hos 13:8 'and there I will devour them like a lion' is compared with that of divine Mot from the passage of 'Baal and Mot': '(The message of divine Mot, the word of the hero beloved of El (is this)): "But my appetite is an appetite of lions (in) the waste"' (Gibson 1978:68). Vul (*et consumam eos*) supports the vocalization of וְאֶכְלָם in the MT in Hos 13:8.

δρυμῶν

The LXX δρυμῶν 'forest': הָעֵרָה seems to have been added after כְּלִבְיָא 'like a

lion' in the MT. If this is the case, perhaps Is 56:9; Jer 5:6a; and Am 3:4 might have had an influence on δρυμου in Hos 13:8, since the Greek δρυμου and beasts/a lion occur together in each verse:

Is 56:9:

כל חיתו שרי אתיו לאכל כל חיתו ביער

'All you wild beasts of the field, come to eat – all you beasts in the forest'  
Παντα τα θηρια τα αγρια, δευτε φαγετε, παντα τα θηρια του δρυμου.

Jer 5:6a:

על כן הכם אריה מיער זאב ערבות ישרדם

'Therefore a lion from the forest shall slay them, a wolf from the plains shall ravage them.' δια τουτο επαισεν αυτους λεων εκ του δρυμου, και λυκος εως των οικων ωλεθρευσεν αυτους.

Am 3:4:

הישאג אריה ביער וטרף אין לו היתן כפיר קולו ממענתו בלתי אם לכר

'Does a lion roar in the forest if he has no prey? Does a young lion growl from his den, if he has caught nothing?' ει ερευζεται λεων εκ του δρυμου αυτου θηραν ουκ εχων; ει δωσει σκυμνος φωνην αυτου εκ της μανδρας αυτου καθολου εαν μη αρπαση τι.

The MT in Hos 13:8b: 'ואכלם שם כלביא חית השרה תבקעם' and I will devour them there like a lion, a wild beast shall tear them' has the support of Vul (*et consumam eos ibi quasi leo bestia agri scindet eos*).

13:9

טז

מ'

כ' ב'

In the MT כ' ב' has widely been emended to מ' on the basis of the LXX טז (and Syr). However, Dahood (1979:573–574) did offer an interpretation for the difficult כ' ב' of the MT: he regarded כ' as the interrogative particle; ב' as precative; and ב in בעזרך as an example of the *beth*



*essentiae* construction. Thus his rendering of v9b is: 'who, please, will be your help?' Holladay (1978:38) notes that 'ב followed by 'אנני is a formula to open conversation with a superior (= with your permission) – the superior is a human in Gen 43:20; and God in Ex 4:10, 13. Presumably Holladay agrees that 'ב is precative. A/F (636) also wish to retain the MT: 'for (you rebelled) against me, against your helper'. Their main argument for the rendering is: 'the sense of the line only emerges if an ellipsis of פשע "to rebel" is recognized'. This, however, seems to be difficult to accept, since we are not sure whether the ellipsis had actually happened or not.

However, if we take 'ב as affirmative or emphatic, it can be parallel to the emphatic אפוא 'now' in v10a: אפוא מלכך אהי 'Where now is your king?' (in this case אהי in the MT should be altered to איה). And if we emend 'ב to 'מ on the basis of the LXX and Syr, we can suppose an easy confusion of ב/מ because of their similar form in the square script and their similar sound as bilabial consonants. We hence seem to be able to read 'ב 'מ instead of 'ב 'ב in the MT; and then the phrase can be rendered: 'indeed who (will be your helper?)'.

### 13:10

που

איה

אהי

The LXX που 'where' (also Syr; Vul; Tar) appears to have read איה for אהי 'I will be' in the MT. If this is the case, the MT will have resulted from metathesis. Or at least the translator could have understood אהי as in the MT as איה, since the context requires the reading of the LXX.

The LXX κρινάτω σε 'let him judge/rule you' seems to have read ישפטיך for ושפטיך 'and your judges/rulers' in the MT. The LXX could be an adjustment to διασώσάτω σε 'let him save you', a literal rendering of the previous וישועך 'to save you' in the MT in v10a: to achieve parallel verb forms. On the other hand, if we can suppose the ellipsis of איה 'where' in front of שפטיך 'your judges/rulers' in the MT, we may assume a similar structure in v10aα and v10bα. That is, we might suppose that the MT שפטיך is parallel to the MT מלכך 'your king' in v10a with the assumption that the force of איה in v10a is retained in the second half of the verse: 'and (where are) your judges/rulers?'

The LXX αρχοντα 'prince' (and also Syr and Tar) seems to have read the singular form שר for the plural form of שרים in the MT, since the LXX αρχοντα could have been influenced by the singular form of מלכך in v10aα, and by the immediately previous מלך in v10bβ. However, the last letter of αρχοντας could have been dropped in an inner-Greek improvement in the transmission of the Greek. This seems to be K/T's supposition, since they note that αρχοντα corresponds to שרים in the MT (cf. there is no note on αρχοντα in Ziegler's critical apparatus).

The root שר occurs eight times in Hosea: once in the singular (3:4), and the other times always in plural forms (5:10; 7:3, 5, 16; 8:10; 9:15; 13:10). The LXX appears to have read the same number as the Hebrew in the MT every



time except in 13:10. More importantly, מלך and שרים occur together again in Hos 8:10. There *BHS* notes that not only the LXX βασιλεα και αρχοντας 'king and princes' but also many MSS; Syr; Tar; and Vul seem to have read the Hebrew שרים and מלך for שרים and מלך in the MT. The phrase occurs again in Jer 49:38 (MT) (25:38 (LXX): βασιλεα και μεγιστανας) in the Old Testament. However, the Hebrew מלך and שר is never used. We should accordingly read the MT שרים, which has the support of Vul (*regem et principes*) in Hos 13:10.

### 13:13

διotti

כי עת

The term עת 'time' occurs three times in Hosea (MT): in 2:11[9]: καθ' ωραν αυτου 'in its time' for בעתו 'in its time' in the MT; 10:12 γνωσεως 'knowledge of': ועת for ועת 'and time'; and here in 13:13. The LXX in 2:11 corresponds to the MT, while in 10:12, the transposition ו/י appears to have happened. In the case of 13:13, Ziegler (1943:178) noted that διotti νυν 'for now' appeared in the recension of Hexapla (Origen); Lucian recension; Catenen-Group; Latin translation; and Coptic translation, etc. In the light of the attestation of כי עת(ה) in the ancient versions, perhaps the LXX translator did read the same Hebrew כי עת as in the MT. In this case the LXX διotti 'because' might have described what he has regarded as the sense of the particular passage, and was preferred to a literal rendering of כי עת.

### 13:14

που

איה

איה

The LXX *που* 'where' (also Syr) seems to have read the Hebrew *הָאָה* for *הָאָה* 'I will be' in the MT twice in v14b as in v10a. K/T note that *που* is aligned with *הָאָה*. They seem to have thought that the translator understood *הָאָה* for *הָאָה* which they read in their Hebrew. The context requires the reading of the LXX, since v14 describes Yahweh's power which conquered the death threatened in v13. If this is the case, the MT may have resulted from metathesis here as in v10a or have been influenced by the same Hebrew *הָאָה* as in v10a.

### 13:15

*ανα μεσον*

*בן*

The MT *בן* 'between' has been emended to *בין* on the basis of the LXX *ανα μεσον* 'among' (and also Syr; Vul) by almost all translators and commentators. However, *בן/בין* could represent a difference in the dialect of the northern kingdom; A/F (640-641) suppose that '*בן* would be the correct spelling for the preposition "between" in the northern orthography'; and K/T simply note that *בן* corresponds to the LXX *ανα μεσον*. In either case, it seems that we can at least translate *בן* in the MT: 'between' without emending it to *בין*.

*διαστελει*

*פִּרְיָ*

The Hebrew *פִּרְיָ* 'he flourishes' in the MT is *hapax legomenon*. K/T note that *פִּרְיָ* is aligned with *διαστελει* 'he separates' in Hos 13:15, while *פִּרְיָ* corresponds to the same Greek in Ru 1:17. The LXX *διαστελει* in Hos



13:15 hence seems to have read יפר' for יפרי' in the MT. This יפר' pictures Ephraim's separation after Yahweh's judgment. יפרי' in the MT however does seem to fit the context; and we can note a word play on יפרי', since we can connect the Hebrew with the verb פרה 'to be fruitful, flourish', which is joined with the name אפרים 'Ephraim' (9:16; 14:9[8]).

επαξει

יבוא

The Hebrew יבוא 'he/it will come' occurs five times in Hosea in the MT (6:3; 7:1; 9:4; 10:12; 13:15). LXX appears to have read the same Hebrew as in the MT in each case except in 13:15. The LXX επαξει 'he shall bring' in 13:15 may have read יבי' for יבוא' in the MT. In this case, the Greek may have come from the translator's presupposition that יהוה is the subject in v15ba. However, the subject in v15ba appears to be קרים רוח יהוה 'the east wind, Yahweh's wind'. Alternatively, as we have already noted on Hos 12:6[5], יבי' could be a result of the transposition ו/י which occurred four other times in Hosea (LXX). In either case we seem to be able to read יבוא' of the MT.

επ' αυτον

עלה

The Hebrew עלה 'rising' occurs seven times in the MT of Hosea (2:2[1:10], 17[15]; 4:15; 8:9; 10:8; 12:14[13] (hiph); 13:15), while the Hebrew עליו 'upon him' appears in the MT of Hosea in 4:9; 10:5 (x2); 12:15. The LXX every time seems to have read the same Hebrew as in the MT except in 13:15. Here the LXX επ' αυτον 'upon him' may have read עליו for עלה 'rising' in the MT. Equally the LXX επ' αυτον may have come from the translator's treating יהוה as the subject in v15ba.

αναξηρανει

שׁב׳

יבושׁ

K/T note that the LXX αναξηρανει 'he shall dry up' corresponds to שׁב׳ 'he will be ashamed' in the MT, while ξηρανθησεται to שׁב׳ in Am 4:7; and ξηραινομενος to שׁב׳ in Za 11:17. The Hebrew for αναξηρανει in Hos 13:15 hence seems to be שׁב׳, which has the support of the fragment from the Dead Sea (Testuz (1955:37)); Syr; and Vul. If שׁב׳ in the MT were original, we may expect the letter י to appear in the fragment, since the letter י occurs more commonly in scrolls from the Dead Sea than in MT orthography. For example, in the fragment above, י occurs in באלוהיה 'against her God' for באלהיה in the MT in Hos 14:1[13:16]; לוא 'not' for לא in Hos 14:4; and ירחם 'he finds mercy' for רחם in Hos 14:4[3]. Moreover, שׁב׳ in the MT is out of the context. We accordingly seem to have to read שׁב׳: αναξηρανει for שׁב׳ in the MT.

την γην αυτου

ארצו

אוצר

The LXX την γην αυτου 'his land' may have read ארצו for אוצר 'his treasury' in the MT. Perhaps we may suppose an accidental transposition of ו/ר in the LXX. Or the LXX may have read the more familiar Hebrew ארצו for אוצר in the MT. In this case we may apply the rule of *lectio difficilior* to the MT, which has the support of Vul (*thesaurum*) and Tar (אוצרין).

14:1

αφανισθησεται

תאשם

As discussed above on Hos 13:1, the LXX αφανισθησεται 'she shall be destroyed'



may have read the same Hebrew as in the MT, meaning 'she shall suffer for her guilt'.

πεσσουνται αυτοι

יפלו

K/T note that πεσσουνται 'they shall fall' corresponds to יפלו 'they shall fall' in the MT, while they treat αυτοι 'they' after πεσσουνται as a plus in Hos 14:1. They note another two examples of αυτοι which they regard as pluses in Hosea:

Hos 5:7a: οτι τεκνα αλλοτρια εγεννηθησαν αυτοις 'for strange children have been born to them' for ילדו בנים זרים 'for they have borne alien children' in the MT.

Hos 9:14a: the second αυτοις in δος αυτοις, κυριε τι δωσεις αυτοις 'give them, O Yahweh - What will you give them?' for תן להם יהוה מה תתן 'give them, O Yahweh - what will you give?' in the MT.

αυτοις in Hos 5:7a and αυτοι in Hos 14:1, however, may be regarded as an integral part of the rendering of ילדו and יפלו rather than a Hebrew להם for αυτοις and הו for αυτοι respectively. And the second αυτοις in Hos 9:14 can refer to the preceding להם as in the MT or the translator may have thought the Hebrew in his mind rather than a divergent Hebrew text. In this sense K/T's regarding αυτοι as pluses in the three passages may be inappropriate.

και αι εν γαστρι εχουσαι αυτων διαρραγησονται

והריותיו יבקעו

The subject והריותיו 'his pregnant women' in the MT is f pl with the suffix

of 3 m. s., while the following verb יבקעו 'they will be ripped open' is m. pl. The inconsistency is particularly striking, since a similar pual form occurs also in the previous phrase: ירטשו 'they shall be dashed in pieces'. Some translators and commentators have hence emended the MT to והריותיהם 'their pregnant women shall be ripped up' or similarly to והריות תבקענה as in NAB.

However, we seem to be able to render והריותיו in the MT 'their pregnant women' without emendation on the following grounds:

1) K/T note that the LXX και οι εν γαστρι εκουσσαι αυτων 'and their women with child will be ripped open' corresponds to והריותיו in the MT. According to them, the translator of Hosea had every time rendered αυτων for יהם - in the MT. The sole exception is in Hos 14:1: αυτων for יו-. They note other examples in Jl 2:10: ποσ προσωπου αυτων 'before them' for לפניו 'before him' in the MT; Am 1:15: οι ιερεαι αυτων 'their priests': כהניו for הוא 'he'; and και οι αρχοντες αυτων 'and their princes' for ושריו 'and his princes'. In this connection we can suppose the LXX και εν γαστρι εκουσσαι αυτων in Hos 14:1 appears to have read or understood והריותיו as retained in the MT as the noun of f pl with the suffix of 3 f pl. Perhaps the previous עלליהם 'their little ones' may have had influence on the rendering of the LXX.

2) We can appeal to the irregularity in Hebrew grammar for the MT: GKC (\*145u) notes that 'the gender or number of the *following* predicate appears to differ from that of the subject, particularly in the 3rd plur. fem. imperf'.

τον θεον υμων

The LXX τον θεον υμων 'your God' in 14:3, and τον θεον ημων 'our God' in 6:1 appear to have been added after יהוה in 14:3, and אל יהוה 'to Yahweh' in 6:1 respectively. The LXX in Hos 14:3; 6:1 seems to have attempted to harmonize with the fuller Hebrew אל יהוה אלהיהם 'to Yahweh their God' in 7:10 and ער יהוה אלהיך 'to Yahweh your God' in 14:2. Vul and Tar support the shorter MT in Hos 6:1; 14:3. K/T note other similar pluses: τον θεον υμων after יהוה in Dt 9:22; and του θεου υμων after יהוה in Dt 9:18. Both Greek readings in Dt also appear to have been influenced by אלהיכם in Dt 9:16, 23 (MT).

οπως μη

בל

כל

The LXX οπως μη 'not' seems to have read כל for כל 'all' in the MT. Following the LXX, for example, Wolff (1974:231) rendered כל תשא עון: 'Will you not take away guilt?', since he interpreted the MT כל as syntactically hardly conceivable.

However, A/F (645) regard Wolff's supposition as unconvincing, and read כל in the MT as it stands, since they recognize כל תשא עון as a discontinuous construct chain: תשא כל עון 'You shall forgive all iniquity'. Their translation is similar to that in NAB: 'Forgive all iniquity': תשא תשא. In his previous study, Freedman (1979:62-63) already noted another examples of the broken construct chain in Hos 6:9b: דרך ירצחו שכמה 'the way they murder to Shechem', in which he understood that דרך שכמה was the



combination: 'On the road to Shechem, they commit murder'; in Hos 8:2: **אלהי ידענוך ישראל** 'My God, we know you, Israel', which should, he argues, be interpreted as **אלהי ישראל ידענוך** 'O God of Israel, we know you'. Accepting this, we must suppose that the LXX **οπως ην** arose from the accidental transposition **ב/ב**. Vul (*omnem*) supports **כל** in the MT in Hos 14:3.

**καρπον χειλεων ημων**

**פְּרִים שִׁפְתֵינוּ**

The words **פְּרִים שִׁפְתֵינוּ** 'bullocks our lips' in the MT appear to stand in juxtaposition. The unusual saying with its strange apposition has thus led scholars to propose a more probable authentic form of the saying. For example, the rendering of the NEB is: '(and we will pay our vows) with cattle from our pens'. As for the translation of the NEB, Brockington (1973:250) noted: **פְּרִי מִשִּׁפְתֵינוּ < פְּרִים מִשִּׁפְתֵינוּ < פְּרִים שִׁפְתֵינוּ**.<sup>1</sup> As far as the consonants are concerned, however, **שִׁפְתֵינוּ** in the MT rather than **מִשִּׁפְתֵינוּ** in NEB has the support of the Dead Sea fragment (Testuz (1955:37)); and LXX **καρπον χειλεων ημων** 'the fruit of our lips'. In this sense we appear to have to revocalize **פְּרִים** 'bullocks' in the MT to **פְּרִים** 'fruit' following the LXX **καρπον**; and we regard **ם-** as an example of the enclitic particle.<sup>2</sup>

#### 14:4

**ελεησει**

**יִרְחֵם**

The LXX **ελεησει** 'he will pity' seems to have read the Hebrew **יִרְחֵם** as a piel,

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<sup>1</sup> For a detailed discussion of 14:3 including the NEB, see Emmerson (1984:151-155).

<sup>2</sup> So Wolff (1974:231); Kuhnigk (1974:154-156); A/F (645).

יִרְחֶם 'he will pity' for a pual, יִרְחֶם 'he has found pity' in the MT.

The Hebrew root רחם occurs eight times in Hosea in the MT (piel: 2:6, 25 [4, 23]; pual: 1:6, 2:3, 25 [1, 23]; 14:4[3]; 2:21 (רַחֲמִים); 9:14 (רַחֵם)). In each case the LXX appears to have read the same Hebrew as in the MT except in 14:4. The MT has the support of the Dead Sea fragment: יְרוּחֶם (Testuz 1955:37). In this case perhaps the translator's rendering of אשר as relative particle: בֶּרַךְ אֲשֶׁר בְּךָ to ο εἷς σοι 'he who is in you' might have had an influence on the LXX.

#### 14:5

τας κατοικιας αυτων

משובתם

The LXX τας κατοικιας αυτων 'their dwellings', seems to have read the Hebrew מושבתם<sup>3</sup> from ישב 'to dwell' for משובתם 'their faithlessness (lit. 'turning')' in the MT as in 11:7: εκ της κατοικιας αυτου 'from their dwellings' for למשובתי 'turning away from me' in the MT. K/T note that in the LXX of these two verses, an etymological exegesis derived from שב is reflected. Rather, we can suppose the transposition of ש/ו in the LXX. These two readings of the LXX: '(My people are bent on) their dwellings' in 11:7, and '(I will heal) their dwellings' in 14:5 are out of context, although they are not entirely impossible.

In contrast, Vul (*ad reditum meum*) in 11:7; and (*contritiones eorum*) in 14:5 support the MT respectively. A similar expression to ארפא משובתם 'I will

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<sup>3</sup> Cf. Gen 36:43; Ex 10:23; Nu 31:10; 1 Ch 4:33; 6:39; 7:28.

heal their faithlessness' in Hos 14:5 occurs again in Jer 3:22a<sup>β</sup>: ארפה משובתיכם 'I will heal your faithlessness', in which the LXX seems to have read the same Hebrew as in the MT: και ιασομαι τα συντριμματα υμων. We can thus read משובתם in the MT: 'their faithlessness'.

#### 14:8

και καθιουνται

יְשָׁבִי

The LXX και καθιουνται 'they shall dwell' appears to have read יִשְׁבוּ (ו) for יְשָׁבִי 'the inhabitants of' in the MT. The LXX seems to be readable in the light of the sound repetition: יִשְׁבוּ in assonance with יִשְׁבוּ at the very beginning of the verse.<sup>4</sup> The repetition is used to emphasise an idea. We can note other examples in Hos 12-14: in 12:2[1] אֶפְרַיִם רָעָה רוּחַ וְרָרַף 'Ephraim feeds the wind; he pursues the east wind'; and as noted above in 12:5ב עָמַן --- מִצְאֵנּוּ 'he met him -- with him'. The LXX και καθιουνται: יִשְׁבוּ in Hos 14:8 has the support of Syr; Tar. In this case יְשָׁבִי in the MT might have come from a scribal confusion of ו/י. Such happenings during the Hasmonaean period (ca. 150-130 B.C.) and Herodian era (ca. 30 B.C.-A.D. 70) are generally acknowledged (cf. Cross 1961b:133-202). In this sense we can read יִשְׁבוּ יִשְׁבוּ for יִשְׁבוּ יְשָׁבִי in the MT; and the Hebrew can be rendered: 'They will return and dwell' or 'They will again dwell', since the phrase may be treated as asyndetic verbal hendiadys or haplography of ו.<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>4</sup> So Buss (1969:27).

<sup>5</sup> Cf. NAB, NEB, Wolff, Rudolph, Mays, and A/F.



Commentators and translators<sup>6</sup> have proposed to read בצלי 'in my shadow' for בצלו 'in his shadow' in MT and LXX. However, the MT and LXX can be read, since the reference of the suffix of בצלו in v8 is not to Yahweh, but to Israel: the latter is consistently portrayed as a flourishing tree; and the same suffix as in בצלו 'in his shadow' appears in v7: ינקותיו 'his shoots'; הדרו 'his beauty'; ריח לו כלבנון 'his fragrance like Lebanon'. בצלו 'in his shadow' in the MT and LXX is also supported by Vul (*in umbra eius*).<sup>7</sup>

ζησονται και μεθυσθησονται στω

יחיו רגן

In the MT, יחיו רגן as it stands can be rendered literally 'they shall make grain live' or 'they shall cause to live grain' because of the piel form of יחיו in the MT.

As for the LXX ζησονται και μεθυσθησονται στω 'they shall live and be filled with grain', the LXX seems to have read יחיו(ו) רגן, since μεθυσω is usually used in LXX to render רוי 'to be filled' as in Is 34:7; Jer 46[LXX:26]:10; Ps 36:9[LXX:35:8], etc.; and שכר 'to be intoxicated/drunken' as in 1Sam 1:14; Is 49:26; Lam 4:21; Na 3:11, etc.<sup>8</sup> Coote (1974) offers a full discussion of LXX/MT of 14:8 and proposes יחיו רגן as a retroversion of ζησονται και μεθυσθησονται στω. If the translator had before him יחיו(ו) רגן as the *Vorlage*

<sup>6</sup> For example, BHK, BHS, RSV, NEB, JB, NJB, Wellhausen, Marti, Wolff, Rudolph, and Mays.

<sup>7</sup> For more discussions on the reference of the suffix in בצלו, see Emmerson (1984:46); Stuart (1987:216).

<sup>8</sup> Cf. Hatch & Redpath (1897:907-908).

for *καὶ μεθυσθησονται*, *וַיִּגְדְּ* in the MT could have resulted from the haplography of *וַיִּגְדְּ(ו)* due to the sound repetition. The LXX could be an extended interpretative rendering of *וַיִּגְדְּ*: here in Hos 14:8, the Greek tradition shows a number of variants from the Hebrew.<sup>9</sup> For example, *στεριχθησονται* 'they will be supported', which appears in Codex Venetus, Origen under the obelus, and the Lucianic Recension, etc, could also be an interpretative rendering of *וַיִּגְדְּ*. We accordingly prefer to read *וַיִּגְדְּ* in the MT: 'they shall grow grain'.

#### 14:9

*αὐτῷ*

*לו*

*לי*

The LXX *αὐτῷ* 'to him' seems to have read *לו* for *לי* 'to me' in the MT.

*אֲפֵרַיִם מַה לִּי עוֹד לַעֲצָבִים* in the MT can be rendered: 'Ephraim, what have I to do with idols any more?', while *τῷ Εφραιμ τι αὐτῷ ἐτι καὶ εἰδωλοῖς* in the LXX may be translated 'Ephraim, what has he to do with idols any more?' The LXX seems to be preferred<sup>10</sup> in the light of the whole context of Hosea: Ephraim, not Yahweh, has continually been involved in idols (cf. 4:17; 8:4; 13:2). Thus Yahweh should reject/denounce the idols so that Ephraim cannot be associated with them any more.

*καὶ ἐγὼ κατισχύσω αὐτόν*

*וְאֲשׁוּרֵנוּ*

In the MT, *אֲנִי עֲנִיתִי וְאֲשׁוּרֵנוּ* as it stands can be rendered: 'It is I who have

<sup>9</sup> Cf. Ziegler (1943:180).

<sup>10</sup> So Ewald, Wellhausen, Harper, Wolff, Mays, Buss, Stuart, JB, NJB, NAB, NEB, and REB.

answered, and watched/lurked in wait for him'. The rather seemingly strange meaning of וַאֲשַׁרְנוּ after עֲנִיתִי in the MT has led scholars to offer other suggestions for the reading of the Hebrew:

1) As for the ancient versions, Rudolph (1966:249) noted that Syr and Vul (*dirigam*) came from a root אֲשַׁר understood in the sense 'to make somebody happy' (beglücken) by Syr, and 'to lead' (leiten) by Vul, rather than the root שׁוּר 'to watch' as read in the MT. Hence the versions stemmed from a slightly different *Vorlage* וַאֲשַׁרְנוּ.

With regard to the reading of the LXX καὶ ἐγὼ κατασχεύσω αὐτόν 'and I will strengthen him', K/T note that in the LXX an etymological exegesis might be reflected: the translator might have read שׁוּר or understood the MT to have that meaning. The LXX ἐταπεινώσα αὐτόν 'I have humbled him' comes from the translator's rendering of the immediately previous verb עֲנִיתִי as עֲנֵה II ('to bend/bow down, humble'), rather than as עֲנֵה I ('to answer, testify'). In Hosea, עֲנֵה (qal) occurs 9 times.<sup>11</sup> LXX rendered the term into 'to humble' four times,<sup>12</sup> and into 'to hear' four times.<sup>13</sup> However, Hosea seems to have employed the term every time to mean 'to answer'<sup>14</sup> and 'to testify'<sup>15</sup> under עֲנֵה I rather than under עֲנֵה II. Moreover, the proper meaning of the term in the context of salvation in Hosea (2:17, 23, 24; 14:9) is 'to answer' rather than 'to humble'. In particular, the term is most

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<sup>11</sup> 2:17, 23 (x3), 24 (x2)[15, 21, 22]; 5:5; 7:10; 14:9[8].

<sup>12</sup> 2:17[15]; 5:5; 7:10; 14:9[8].

<sup>13</sup> 2:23[21] (x2) (LXX read the term twice for three times in MT); 24[22] (x2).

<sup>14</sup> 2:17, 23, 24[15, 21, 22]; 14:9[8].

<sup>15</sup> 7:10.



emphatically used to describe Yahweh's salvific acts for Israel by its repetition five times in two verses (2:23-24). Thus the reading of the LXX 'I have humbled him, but I will strengthen him' in 14:9a $\beta$  seems to be difficult to accept.

2) If we refer to commentators and translators, as far as the polemic against fertility cult is concerned, the reading of Wellhausen is worth noting: 'Ich bin seine Anath und seine Aschera' ('I am his Anath and his Ashera'): עָנָתוּ וְאַשְׁרָתוֹ.<sup>16</sup> NEB read '(I have spoken) and I affirm it': וְאֶשְׁרֶנּוּ, which would lead to v9b.

3) However, it seems that we can accept the MT, and suggest a word play within it. In connection with this, the following two comments are appropriate: Emmerson (1984:50) refers to Wellhausen, but follows the MT: 'In the affirmation אֲנִי עָנִיתִי וְאֶשְׁרֶנּוּ "I myself have answered and will watch over him", a deliberate play on words can be detected. Yahweh is for Israel both Anath (עָנָת) and Asherah (אַשְׁרָה)'. Fisch (1988:156) deduces 'Assyria' from the MT: 'He [the speaker] neutralizes the threat of Asshur, for the name Asshur is embedded in the words "I answer him and *look out for him* (וְאֶשְׁרֶנּוּ). It is as though God were saying, "I answer him by taking care of the threat of Asshur!"'.

Considering Ephraim's association with idols in v9a $\alpha$ , the view of Emmerson on the word play (other gods) may be closer to Hosea than Fisch's (Assyria).

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<sup>16</sup> Rudolph (1966:249); and similarly Duhm: 'Ich bin ihm Anath und Aschera'.

In any case, both elements seem to be reflected in the Hebrew in v9a $\beta$ , since they together occur in 14:4[3]. Hosea had had to struggle with these two main issues, which, however, will not bother him any more.

In the light of these analyses, we prefer to read the MT: 'It is I who have answered, and watched for him'.

#### II.4 A Translation of Hosea 12-14

As a result of the above text-critical analyses of Hos 12-14, we may translate the text as follows:

##### 12:1-15

1 Ephraim has surrounded me with deceit,  
and the House of Israel with falsehood.  
Judah still wanders with El;  
and maintains faith with the holy ones.

סבבני בכחש אפרים  
ובמרמה בית ישראל  
ויהורה ער רר עם אל  
ועם קדושים נאמן

2 Ephraim feeds the wind,  
he pursues the east wind all day long.  
He multiplies<sup>17</sup> lies and destruction.  
They make<sup>18</sup> covenant with Assyria.  
Oil is carried<sup>19</sup> to Egypt.

אפרים רעה רוח  
וררף קדים כל היום  
כזב ושר ירבה  
וברית עם אשור יכרתו  
ושמן למצרים יובל

3 Yahweh has a dispute with Israel,<sup>20</sup>

וריב ליהוה עם ישראל

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<sup>17</sup> The imperfects ירבה, יכרתו, and יובל all are rendered by the present to express the actions which are continually repeated; cf. GKC (#107 f, g).

<sup>18</sup> See the above note on 12:2[1].

<sup>19</sup> See the above note on 12:2[1].

<sup>20</sup> Cf. the MT has 'Judah'; a detailed discussion supporting the reading of 'Israel' will follow later.

to punish<sup>1</sup> Jacob according to his ways;  
according to his deeds he will repay him.

ולפקר על יעקב כדרכיו  
במעלליו ישיב לו

4 In the womb he took his brother,  
in his manhood he contended with<sup>2</sup> God.

בבטן עקב את אחיו  
ובאוננו שרה את אלהים

5 He contended with<sup>3</sup> an angel and prevailed;  
He wept and sought his favour;  
at Bethel he used to meet<sup>4</sup> him  
and there he would speak<sup>5</sup> to him.

וישר אל מלאך ויכל  
בכה ויתחנן לו  
בית אל ימצאנו  
ושם ידבר עמנו

6 Yahweh is the God of the Hosts;  
Yahweh is his memorial.<sup>6</sup>

יהוה אלהי הצבאות  
יהוה זכרו

7 So you, by the help of your God, should<sup>7</sup> return;  
Keep love and justice,  
wait for your God continually.

ואתה באלהיך תשוב  
חסד ומשפט שמר  
וקוה אל אלהיך תמיד

8 Canaan, in his hands are false scales.  
He loves to oppress.

כנען בידו מאזני מרמה  
לעשק אהב

9 Ephraim said, 'Indeed I have become rich;  
I have found wealth for myself.  
All my toils will not find for myself  
any guilt that is sin.'

ויאמר אפרים אך עשרתי  
מצאתי און לי  
כל יגיעי לא ימצאו לי  
עון אשר חטא

10 But I am Yahweh your God  
from the land of Egypt.  
Once more I will make you dwell in tents  
as in the days of meeting.

ואנכי יהוה אלהיך  
מארץ מצרים  
עד אושיבך באהלים  
כימי מועד

---

<sup>1</sup> Reading ולפקר for לפקר in the MT; cf. LXX: του εαδικασαι 'to punish'; BHS; Harper (1905a:374).

<sup>2</sup> שרה with עם (Gen 32:29); את (Hos 12:4); and אל (Hos 12:5) all seem to have the same meaning: 'to contend/strive with'; cf. BDB (975b); Holladay (1978:354).

<sup>3</sup> See the note on 12:4[3].

<sup>4</sup> The imperfects ימצאנו and ידבר are translated into the past to represent repeated past action; cf. Gen 28:10-22; 35:9-15; GKC (#107b); and Davidson (1902:65-68; 1966:83, 196)), who called the usage as 'frequentative imperfect'.

<sup>5</sup> See the above note on 12:5[4]b.

<sup>6</sup> Lit. "Yahweh" is how he is remembered.

<sup>7</sup> The imperfect is used to express the potential act; cf. Davidson (1966:83, 197).



11 I spoke<sup>8</sup> to the prophets.  
It was I who multiplied visions.  
Through the prophets I gave<sup>9</sup> parables.

ורברתי על הנביאים  
ואנכי חזון הרביתי  
וביר הנביאים ארמה

12 If Gilead be evil,  
they surely have become worthless.  
In Gilgal they sacrificed bulls.  
Their altars too were like stone heaps  
on the furrows of the field.

אם גלעד און  
אך שוא היו  
בגלגל שורים זבחו  
גם מזבחותם כגלים  
על תלמי שרי

13 Jacob fled to the land of Aram.  
Israel served for a wife,  
for a wife he was a keeper.

ויברח יעקב שרה ארם  
ויעבר ישראל באשה  
ובאשה שמר

14 By a prophet Yahweh brought Israel up  
from Egypt  
By a prophet he was kept.

ובנביא העלה יהוה את ישראל  
ממצרים  
ובנביא נשמר

15 Ephraim has given bitter provocation.  
He will leave his bloodguilt on him.  
His Lord will return to him his reproach.

הבעים אפרים תמרורים  
ורמיו עליו יטוש  
וחרפתו ישיב לו ארניו

### 13:1-15

1 When Ephraim spoke, there was trembling;  
he was exalted<sup>10</sup> in Israel.  
But he became guilty through Baal and died.

כדבר אפרים רתת  
נשא הוא בישראל  
ויאשם בבעל וימת

2 Now they continue<sup>11</sup> to sin;  
they have made a molten image for themselves,  
idols from their silver according to their skill;  
all of it is the work of craftsmen.  
'To them', they say, 'make sacrifice.'  
Humans kiss calves.

ועתה יוספו לחטא  
ויעשו להם מסכה  
מכספם כתבונם עצבים  
מעשה חרשים כלה  
להם הם אמרים זבחו  
אדם עגלים ישקון

3 Therefore they will be like morning mist,  
and like dew that goes away early.  
Like chaff blown from the threshing floor  
and like smoke from the window.

לבן יהיו בענן בקר  
וכטל משכים הלך  
כמץ יסער מגרן  
וכעשן מארבה

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<sup>8</sup> See the above note on 12:5[4]b.

<sup>9</sup> See the above note on 12:5[4]b.

<sup>10</sup> In the light of נָשָׂא after נָשָׂא, the verb seems to have to be vocalized to the nip'al participle: נִשְׂא rather than the qal נָשָׂא in the MT. Cf. Syr; Wellhausen; Harper; and Rudolph read נָשָׂא 'a prince/chief ruler'.

<sup>11</sup> See the above note on 12:2[1].

4 I am Yahweh your God  
from the land of Egypt.  
You should<sup>12</sup> not know any God but me;  
for there is no saviour except me.

ואנכי יהוה אלהיך  
מארץ מצרים  
ואלהים זולתי לא תרע  
ומושיע אין בלתי

5 It was I who fed<sup>13</sup> you in the wilderness,  
in the land of drought.

אני רעתך במדבר  
בארץ תלאבות

6 According to their pasture, they were filled;  
when they were filled, their heart was lifted up.  
Therefore they forgot me.

כמרעיתם וישבעו  
שבעו וירם לבם  
על בן שכחוני

7 I will be to them like a lion;  
like a leopard by the way of Assyria.

ואהיה להם כמו שחל  
בנמר על דרך אשור

8 I will fall upon them like a bereaved bear,  
I will tear open their breast.  
I will devour them there like a lion,  
a wild beast shall tear them.

אפגשם כרב שכול  
ואקרע סגור לבם  
ואבלם שם כלביא  
חית השרה תבקעם

9 Your destruction,<sup>14</sup> O Israel!;  
who indeed will be your helper?

שחתך ישראל  
כי מי בעוזרך

10 Where now is your king  
that he may save you in all your cities?  
And your rulers, of whom you said,  
'Give me a king and princes'?

איה מלכך אפוא  
ויושיעך בכל עריך  
ושפטיך אשר אמרת  
תנה לי מלך ושרים

11 I may give<sup>15</sup> you a king in my anger,  
I may take<sup>16</sup> him away in my wrath.

אתן לך מלך באפי  
ואקח בעברתי

12 Ephraim's guilt is bound up,  
his sin is stored away.

צרור עון אפרים  
צפונה חטאתו

---

<sup>12</sup> See the above note on 12:7[6].

<sup>13</sup> For this rendering, see the discussion on 13:5 below.

<sup>14</sup> Wolff (1974:220) read שחתך 'I will destroy you' after Syr; his reading is followed by A/F (636) and recently Stuart (1987:199-200). However, as far as the consonants are concerned, the MT שחתך seems to have the support of LXX (τη δαφθορα σου) and Vul (*perditio tua*), although both appear to have read שחתך as a noun; cf. K/T note the LXX corresponds to the MT, while K-K (1974-75:87) supposes שחתך for the Vul (*perditio tua*).

<sup>15</sup> See the above note on 12:7[6].

<sup>16</sup> See the above note on 12:7[6].



13 The pangs of birth shall come for him,  
he is an unwise child.  
For in time he was not stationed  
at the opening of the womb.<sup>17</sup>

חבלי יולדה יבאו לו  
הוא בן לא חכם  
כי עת לא יעמד  
במשבר בנים

14 Shall I ransom them from the hand of Sheol?<sup>18</sup>  
Shall I redeem them from Death?<sup>19</sup>  
Where are your plagues, O Death?  
Where is your sting, O Sheol?  
Compassion shall be hidden from my eyes.

מיר שאול אפרם  
ממות אגאלם  
איה דברך מות  
איה קטבך שאול  
נחם יסתר מעיני

15 Though he may<sup>20</sup> flourish among brothers,  
the east wind, the wind of Yahweh, will come  
rising from the wilderness.  
His fountain will dry up,  
his spring will run dry.  
He shall plunder the treasure  
of all precious things.

כי הוא בן אחים יפריא  
יבוא קרים רוח יהוה  
ממרב ר עלה  
ויבש מקורו  
ויחרב מעינו  
הוא ישסה אוצר  
כל בלי חמדה

#### 14:1-10

1 Samaria shall suffer for her guilt,  
for she has rebelled against her God.  
They shall fall by the sword;  
their infants shall be dashed in pieces,  
their pregnant women shall be torn open.

תאשם שמרון  
כי מרתה באלהיה  
בחרב יפלו  
עלליהם ירטשו  
והריותיו יבקעו

2 Return, O Israel,  
to Yahweh your God,  
for you have stumbled on your guilt.

שובה ישראל  
ער יהוה אלהיך  
כי כשלת בעונך

3 Take words with you,  
return to Yahweh;  
say to him,  
'Take away all iniquity.  
Accept what is good,  
that we may render the fruit of our lips.

קחו עמכם דברים  
ושובו אל יהוה  
אמרו אליו  
כל תשא עון  
וקח טוב  
ונשלמה פרים שפתינו

4 Assyria will not rescue us;

אשור לא יושיענו

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<sup>17</sup> Literally 'in the breaking forth of children'.

<sup>18</sup> The context appears to opt for the interpretation of the clauses as questions.

<sup>19</sup> See the above note on 13:14aα.

<sup>20</sup> See the note on 12:7[6].



we will not ride on horses.  
We will not say any more, "Our God",  
to the work of our hands;  
for in you the orphan finds<sup>21</sup> compassion'.

5 I will heal their turning,  
I will love them freely.  
For my anger has turned from him.

6 I will be like the dew for Israel;  
he will flourish like the lily.  
He shall strike root like Lebanon.

7 His shoots shall spread out.  
His beauty shall be like the olive tree,  
his fragrance like Lebanon.

8 They shall return and dwell in his shadow,  
they shall grow grain.  
They shall flourish like the vine,  
his renown shall be like the wine of Lebanon.

9 Ephraim,  
what has he to do with idols any more?  
It is I who have answered, and watched for him.  
I am like a luxuriant fir tree,  
your fruit is found from me.

10 Whoever is wise,  
let him understand these things,  
whoever is intelligent, let him know them.  
For the ways of Yahweh are right,  
the righteous walk<sup>22</sup> in them,  
but sinners stumble<sup>23</sup> in them.

על סוס לא נרכב  
ולא נאמר עוד אלהינו  
למעשה ידינו  
אשר בך ירחם יתום

ארפא משובתם  
אהבם נרבה  
כי שב אפי ממנו

אהיה בטל לישראל  
יפרח כשושנה  
ויך שרשיו כלבנון

ילכו ינקותיו  
ויהי כזית הודו  
וריח לו כלבנון

ישבו ישבו בצלו  
יחיו רגן  
ויפרחו כגפן  
זכרו כיון לבנון

אפרים  
מה לו עוד לעצבים  
אני ענית ואשורנו  
אני בברוש רענן  
ממני פריך נמצא

מי חכם  
ויבן אלה  
נבון וידעם  
כי ישרים דרכי יהוה  
וצדקים ילכו בהם  
ופשעים יכשלו בהם

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<sup>21</sup> The imperfect ארחם is rendered to the present to express the general truth; cf. Davidson (1966:83).

<sup>22</sup> See the above note on 14:4[3].

<sup>23</sup> See the above note on 14:4[3].

### III STRUCTURAL CRITICISM OF HOSEA 12-14

#### III.1 Significance of Structural Criticism

Structural criticism is, as textual criticism, generally acknowledged as basic for an understanding of a book of the Old Testament, since full understanding depends on the demarcation of its literary units and structure. For example, in his general introduction to the study of Isaiah 40-48, Gitay (1981:2) emphasizes the delimitation of units: 'the determination of the literary units --- is not just a technical problem, because the division of the literary units also determines the understanding of the book'; in his study on Jeremiah, Lundbom (1975b:114) remarks that 'structure is a key to meaning and interpretation'. And similarly Holladay (1976:31) notes: 'to determine the boundaries between the subdivisions is a basic problem for commentators'. It hence seems that in his recent commentary on Jeremiah, Holladay (1986:xii) lays greater stress on the structure of the book. Whereas the traditional format of the commentary series *Hermeneia* - A Critical and Historical Commentary on the Bible provides sections on Text; Form; Setting; Interpretation; and Aim for each passage, Holladay puts a section on 'Structure' before that on 'Form'; and he discusses the structure of each passage under three headings: '(1) What is the delimitation of the passage in question? (2) Why is the passage in its present location? (3) What is the inner structure of the passage?'

As to the book of Hosea, the task of delimiting units and structure is of equal importance. In his study on Hosea 2:1-3[1:10-2:1], Wolff (1952-53a:82) argues that the demarcation of individual units is the first question to be



addressed; and as to the key to understanding Hosea, Freedman (1979:65) notes three important elements: 'Historical context, grammar, and structure'. Among these, he lays particular stress on structure:

On a broader scale, a basic feature of our approach has to do with the structure of the material. We try to observe and isolate and identify literary devices that are recognized in all literature. That they can and may contribute to a solution is a factor which is not often acknowledged. This involves gross structure: poets didn't think only in terms of half lines and lines; they planned ahead, and clues to the meaning of an obscure sentence in one place are to be found in a sentence in another place. Whether this is written or oral is almost an irrelevant question. The important thing is that no matter how large the unit, all of it is significant for understanding any part of it.

The results of his work with Andersen on resolving the problems of the book, mainly by ascertaining its own structure, appear as a massive volume in the Anchor Bible Series (1980), in which they repeatedly make use of structural terminology, for example, structure (452); structural devices (70, 119); structural correspondence (623); structural dislocation (576), etc.

It is generally recognised that the book of Hosea is composed of two/three parts: chs 1-3; 4-14 (4-11/12-14). For instance, Wolff (1974:xxix-xxxi) argues that in the book of Hosea there are three large transmission complexes: chs 1-3; 4-11; 12-14, while A/F (3-27) suggest two parts to the book: 1) Hosea's marriage (chs 1-3); 2) Hosea's prophecies (chs 4-14). Chs 1-3 consist of various forms whose relationships are decided through their use in the story of Hosea's marriage, and hence, as far as the delimitation of textual structure in chs 1-3 is concerned, scholars did not seem to have faced as great a difficulty as in Hos 4-14. On the other hand, to distinguish units of sayings in Hos 4-14 has been recognised as a highly difficult task for



commentators, because of text-critical problems; rare words; odd syntax; distinctive style; few prophetic introductory and concluding formulas, which can be useful for determining units, etc. Smith (1896:222) noted difficulties in deciding units particularly in Hos chs 4-14 comparing with Amos as follows:

It is impossible to separate the section, long as it is, into subsections, or into oracles, strophes, or periods. The reason for this we have already seen, in the turbulence of the period reflected, in the divided interests and abrupt and emotional style of the author, and in the probability that part at least of the book was not prepared for public speaking. The periods and climaxes, the refrains, the catch words by which we are helped to divide even the confused second section of the Book of Amos, are not found in Hosea. Only twice does the exordium of a spoken address occur: at the beginning of the section (chap. iv.1), and at what is now the opening of the next chapter (v.1). The phrase *'tis the oracle of Jehovah'*, which occurs so periodically in Amos, and thrice in the second chapter of Hosea, is found only once in chaps. iv-xiv. Again, the obvious climaxes or perorations, of which we found so many in Amos, are very few, and even when they occur the next verses start impulsively from them, without a pause.

In spite of these difficulties in delimiting units and structure, since the book is composed of 14 chapters, scholars have continually attempted to divide it into smaller or larger units. In the following section, I will review previous literature on literary units and structure in the book of Hosea in chronological order; and as in the case of my study above, chs 4-14, and particularly chs 12-14, will be more closely probed for the purpose of the present study than chs 1-3. After the review an alternative approach will be suggested for the understanding of the structure of Hos 12-14.

## III.2 Review of the Studies on the Structural Criticism of the Book of Hosea

### III.2.1 T. K. Cheyne (1884)

Cheyne (19-20) argued that Hos 4-14 had a unity of their own, in which there was an emotional order rather than chronological or logical one:

There is indeed an argument, but it is one of the heart, not of the head. It is based on the assumption that Jehovah cannot be less loving and less faithful than the creatures He has made. Bitter domestic experience has developed in the prophet the most wonderful capacity for unselfish affection, and he argues from this (somewhat as our Lord in Matt. vii.11) to the existence of a still greater passion of self-sacrificing love in 'the framer of hearts'.

Cheyne accordingly attempted to read the heart of Yahweh through Hosea's sayings. For example, Cheyne (122) interpreted Hos 13:9-15 as follows:

An alternation of cries expressive of the contending thoughts and emotions of the tender-hearted but truthful prophet. The punishment is inevitable; yea, it is begun. Yet - if Israel would only repent! Indeed, his Father must interpose. And yet, on the other hand, rebellion must be punished.

On the basis of his assumed criterion of the heart's influence on the sayings of Hosea, Cheyne (113-127) divided Hos 12-14 as follows: 12:1-7[11:12-12:6], 8-15[7-14]; 13:1-8, 9-14:1[13:16]; 14:2-4, 5-9, 10[1-3, 4-8, 9].

As to the criterion for dividing units, emotional influence alone can be regarded as oversubjective. However, at the same time, one can note Hosea's special feelings, filled with pathos toward Israel, which bear upon apparently especially difficult sayings; those through which the feelings of Yahweh's heart were also able to be expressed.



### III.2.2 G. A. Smith (1896)

The thematic content of Hosea has been the starting point for several studies. They suppose that each literary unit can be divided from that following on the basis of its topic or theme. For example, Smith (223) noted that in Hos 4-14 there was a progress of themes from Israel's sin, through their punishment, to their restoration, which has, for instance, been divided into 4:1-6:11a; 6:11b-9:9; 9:10-14:10[9] (Ewald 1875:247-304) or 4:1-8:14; 9:1-11:11; 11:12-14:10[9] (Driver 1913:284). Smith (223) himself presented the succession of themes in Hos 4-14 rather differently: Israel's moral decay (4:1-7:7); and Israel's political decay (7:8-10:15), which is followed by the hope of Israel's bright future (chs 11; 14):

The emphasis of Hosea's prophesying --- changes about the middle of chap. vii from their Moral Decay to their Political Decay, and that the description of the latter is modified or interrupted by Two Visions of better things: one of Jehovah's early guidance of the people, with a great pouring of His Love upon them, in chap. xi; and one of their future return to Jehovah and restoration in chap. xiv.

Smith (299-317) hence divided Hos 12-14 into two main sub-sections:

- I. 12:1-14:1[11:12-13:16]: 'The final argument'
  - 12:1-15[11:12-12:14]: 'The people and their father Jacob'
  - 13:1-14:1[13:16]: 'The last judgment'
- II. 14:2-10[1-9]: 'I will be as the dew'

As a result, in his outline of Hos 12-14, instead of dividing Hos 12-14 into three chapters, simply adopting the traditional chapter divisions, Smith seems to have emphasized Israel's future restoration in ch 14 (as in ch 11), since he divided Hos 4-14 into five sub-sections, two of which are chs 11



and 14 on their own (a) 4:1-7:7; (b) 7:8-10:15; (c) 11:1-11; (d) 12:1-14:1[11:12-13:16]; (e) 14:2- 10[1-9].

### III.2.3 W. R. Harper (1905a)

In his commentary (1905a:clix-clxii), as noted earlier, Harper regarded most of references to Judah; Messianic allusions, etc. as later additions; and he estimated the proportion of such material as about one-fourth of the whole, and in the case of Amos, as about one-fifth (viii). Moreover, in the preface to his commentary, and in the section 'THE POETICAL FORM OF AMOS AND HOSEA', he laid great stress on strophic structure and textual criticism: 'as a matter of fact, "strophic structure" is only another name for "logical structure"' (ix); 'the *strophe* --- in every case, constitutes a logical unit' (clxviii); 'textual criticism has found a great ally in this new work of metrical and strophic structure' (clxix).

On the basis of his work, Harper published *The Structure of the Text of the Book of Hosea* (1905b), in which he presented the strophic structure of the various logical units indicating later accretions. He accordingly treated the following units as the *original* ones in Hos 12-14: 12:1a-4a[11:12a-12:3a], 8-10[7-9], 11[10], 15[14], 12[11]; 13:1-2b, 2c-3, 4-6, 7-11, 12-13, 14, 15; 14:1[13:16].

### III.2.4 H. W. Wolff (1961a (German); 1974 (English))

As we have already noted above, in the book of Hosea, Wolff (1974:xxx-xxxiii) distinguishes rhetorical units and kerygmatic units, in

which genres and settings may be identified. Wolff (1974:208-209, 222-224, 233-234, 239) accordingly divides Hos 12-14 into fifteen units: 12:1-2[11:12-12:1], 3-7, 8-11, 12, 13-14, 15[2-6, 7-10, 11, 12-13, 14]; 13:1-3, 4-8, 9-11, 12-14:1[13:16], 2-4, 5, 6-8, 9, 10[1-3, 4, 5-7, 8, 9]. The delimitation offered by Wolff, however, seems difficult to accept, as it often appears uneasy to distinguish between the nature and extent of rhetorical units and kerygmatic units clearly, as has been discussed above.

### III.2.5 W. L. Holladay (1966)

In the study of 'CHIASMUS, THE KEY TO HOSEA XII 3-6', (after his brief survey of the previous interpretations of the passage by Nyberg, Vriezen, Gertner, and Wolff), Holladay gives three major arguments for his interpretation of this passage: 1) Hosea used the Jacob-material which is found in Genesis; 2) v5[4]a $\beta$  refers, as does v4[3]a, to Esau; 3) there is a chiastic structure in the passage as follows:

- (a) Yahweh - 3a $\alpha$
- (b) Israel (Judah in MT emended) - 3a $\alpha$
- (c) Jacob - 3b
- (d) Jacob and Esau at birth - 4a
- (e) Jacob with the divine being - 4b
- (e') Jacob with the divine being - 5a
- (d') Jacob and Esau at their reunion - 5a $\beta$
- (c') God and *him* (Jacob the patriarch) at Bethel - 5b $\alpha$
- (b') God and *us* (Israel the nation) at Bethel - 5b $\beta$
- (a') Yahweh - 6

Holladay's suggestions - that the source for Jacob's weeping and imploring is the narrative of Jacob's encounter with Esau in Gen 33, in which both בָּכָה and יָנַח are found, and that a reference to Jacob and Esau in v5[4]a $\beta$  fits



the chiasm of Hos 12:3-6[2-5] - are interesting but not convincing, since 1) we appear to be able to read v5[4]aß with Gen 32:23-33 rather than Gen 33 (cf. Bentzen (1951:58-59); Ackroyd (1963:245-59)); a detailed discussion will follow later; 2) as for a large chiasmus in vv 3-6[2-5], as noted earlier, Hosea appears to have applied the meaning of Yahweh's words for Jacob in v5[4] to Hosea's contemporary audience Israel in v7[6], rather than in v5[4], which will also be discussed in detail later; cf. Coote (1971:393) regarded Holladay's study of a chiastic pattern in vv3-6[2-5] as 'implausibly neat and --- neglecting the significance of Bethel and other word plays in the chapter'; and recently McKenzie (1986:315) commented on Holladay: 'his attempt to find a large chiasmus in vv3-6 is forced'.

### III.2.6 W. Rudolph (1966)

As for the structure of the book, while Wolff argued that all three large complexes of transmission (chs 1-3; 4-11; 12-14) each moved from accusation to threat, and then to proclamation of salvation, in his section 'The Book of Hosea', Rudolph (25-27) stated that although in chs 1-3, Hosea's message was organized from proclamation of judgment to salvation, it is difficult to realize clear evidence of this organization in chs 4-14. Rather in these chapters, on the whole, we can see a chronological framework in some materials, while the others are arranged by contents.

After giving more weight to textual criticism, literary, rhetorical devices and thematic principles for delimiting and understanding the text (e.g. 13:1-14:1[13:16]) than to its growth and composition, Rudolph (19-22) divided Hos 12-14 into thirteen units: 12:1[11:12], 2-3, 4-7, 8-10, 11-15[1-2, 3-6, 7-9,



10-14]; 13:1-3, 4-8, 9-11, 12-15aα, 15aβ-14:1[13:16], 2-4, 5-9, 10[1-3, 4-8, 9].

### III.2.7 J. M. Ward (1966)

Ward is not interested in the authentic words of Hosea but tries to interpret all passages with an insight into their positive theological contribution. His theological approach to Hosea is manifested in the introduction to the commentary: 'I do in fact believe that the most adequate *approach* to biblical theology is the exposition of its theologies' (xvii); 'we would be interested only in the theology of the present books, that is to say, of their final compilers, and not in that of the "original" writers, whose theology is presumably irrecoverable' (xix). Ward accordingly unites the story of Hosea's marriage (chs 1 & 3) with Hosea's message (chs 2, 4-14). He divides the book into three parts: (1) chs 1-3: 'ISRAEL, THE BRIDE OF YAHWEH'; (2) chs 4-10: 'THE FACES OF INFIDELITY' and (3) chs 11-14: 'PROVIDENCE AND HISTORY'. And these three parts are delimited into fifteen sections, which are usually divided into units composed of irregular strophes. Hos 12-14 can hence be divided into twelve units: 12:1-3[11:12-12:2], 4-7, 8-10, 11-12, 13-15[3-6, 7-9, 10-11, 12-14]; 13:1-3, 4-11, 12-14, 15-14:1[13:16], 2-4, 5-9, 10[1-3, 4-8, 9].

### III.2.8 M. J. Buss (1969)

In his monograph, as noted earlier, Buss tried to discuss the book of Hosea with a method - a modification of classical form criticism, which came from his reaction to Wolff's proposals (1961a (German); 1974 (English)). For instance, in the case of literary units in the book of Hosea, Buss (29) felt

there was a difficulty in Wolff's approach to the demarcation of individual units in the book, and hence analyzed the units with the criteria of 1) a full beginning, that is, 'mentioning Israel by name rather than opening with an expressed or unexpressed "they" without antecedent'; and 2) catch word association. Buss (7-27) accordingly suggests, as noted earlier, that the book has two parts: chs 1-3: 'ISRAEL, THE WHORE'; chs 4-14: 'GOD AND ISRAEL AT ODDS', in which Buss argues there are four cycles in Hos 4-11, while he describes chs 12-14 as 'Final Collection: The Overthrow of Sacred Traditions', which is divided into six units:

1. 'The Falsehood of Jacob's Descendants' (12:1-2, 3-15[11:12-12:1, 2-14])
2. 'A Fall From Yahweh, the Only Savior' (13:1-11)
3. 'Sheol (No Life From the Womb)' (13:12-14:1[13:16])
4. 'Turning' (14:2-9[1-8])
5. An Addition (14:10[9])

### III.2.9 J. L. Mays (1969)

Mays (15-17) briefly summarized the structure of the book: it is divided into two sections by their size and plan: chs 1-3; and 4-14. Chs 1-3 serve as a kind of introduction to the book, and show the movement from punishment to salvation. Chs 4-14 are organized by the collector using common themes, and catchwords, and appear to have a general chronological sequence on the basis of the historical settings of the individual sayings. Chs 4-11/12-14 also exhibit the alternation of punishment-salvation. The present form and scope was attributed to an editor or group working in Judah after the destruction of the northern kingdom.

In accordance with this, special attention is given to form critical analyses: genre, setting, style, and structure. In Hos 12-14, Mays's units are: 12:1-2[11:12-12:1], 3-7, 8-12, 13-15[2-6, 7-11, 12-14]; 13:1-3, 4-8, 9-11, 12-14:1[13:16], 2-9, 10[1-8, 9].

### III.2.10 F. I. Andersen/D. N. Freedman (1980)

As noted above, an approach which regards the book of Hosea not as a collection of small independent units but as a literary whole has been taken by A/F. They focus on the final form of the text, which they approach with a form of rhetorical criticism. They apply the principle to their analyses of chs 1-14 throughout. The commentary is thus full of various rhetorical analyses concerning word repetition, parallels, chiasms, inclusions, introversions, and other literary/rhetorical devices. They accordingly divide the book into two parts:

#### **PART I: 'HOSEA'S MARRIAGE' (chs 1-3)**

#### **PART II: 'HOSEA'S PROPHECIES' (chs 4-14)**

- 1) Chs 4-7: 'The state of the nation'
- 2) Chs 8-11: 'The spiritual history of Israel'
- 3) Chs 12-14: 'Retrospect and Prospect'

Their ten units in Hos 12-14 are: 12:1-6[11:12-12:5], 7- 15[6-14]; 13:1-3, 4-6, 7-8, 9-11, 12-15 $\alpha$ , 15 $\alpha\beta$ -14:1[13:16], 2-4, 5-9, 10[1-3, 4-8, 9].

In short, as stated earlier, their detailed discussion of literary units and structure should contribute to our understanding of structural patterns in the book of Hosea.



### III.2.11 J. Jeremias (1983)

Jeremias attempts to discuss the text of Hosea on the basis of chronological order. One of his main interests in his commentary is to emphasise the text of Hosea as it stands. The shift away from oral history to written text has similarities with the approach of A/F (1980).

As to Hosea's background and composition of the book, Jeremias primarily relies on chronological data: Hosea's activities lasted from 755/50 to about 724 B.C., which can be divided into three periods: 1) during the reign of Jeroboam II until 747 - 2:4-15[2-13]; 4:4-5:7; 2) the Syro Ephraimite war and afterwards, ca 733 B.C. - 5:8-9:9; 3) between 731 and the beginning of the Assyrian siege of Samaria in 724 - 2:16-17[14-15]; 3:1-4; 9:10- 14:1[13:16]. After the fall of Israel Hosea's disciples fled to Judah and there the written form of Hosea's message took place. The book is composed of three parts: chs 1-3; 4-11; 12-14. The first part is composed by thematic principle, while chs 4-14 are arranged mainly in chronological order. He accordingly analyses Hos 12-14 as follows: 12:1-2[11:12-12:1], 3-7, 8-10, 11-14, 15[2-6, 7-9, 10-13, 14]; 13:1-8, 9-11, 12-14:1[13:16], 2-4, 5-9, 10[1-3, 4-8, 9].

### III.2.12 D. Stuart (1987)

As for 'form, structure, and style' in the book of Hosea, Stuart (8) argues that many of the individual oracles of Hosea have unique, unusual forms or mixed ones, and the oracles of Hosea were so artistically or skilfully arranged and written down that form criticism has particular difficulty in understanding Hosea's oracles. For an understanding of Hosea's oracles Stuart

(8) therefore suggests an alternative:

The oracles of Hosea must be seen, --- in macrocosm rather than microcosm. That is, one is obliged to ignore to some degree the rather rapid and unpredictable shifts in person, subject matter, and tone which can occur so often from couplet to couplet and verse to verse in a given oracle, in favour of seeing these as ultimately fitting neatly into a coherent pericope, the point and effectiveness of which is no less comprehensible than would have been the case if the oracle displayed a more obviously systematic pattern.

As a result, we note that Stuart is more sympathetic to A/F than Wolff, as he favours understanding Hosea's oracles in terms of literary units and structure. His delimitation of Hos 12-14 is: 12:1-2[11:12-12:1], 3, 4-6, 7, 8-9, 10-11, 12, 13-14[2, 3-6, 7-8, 9-10, 11, 12-13], 15[14]-13:1, 2-3, 4-14, 15-14:1[13:16], 2-4, 5-9, 10[1-3, 4-8, 9].

Stuart's point of view of the characteristics of Hosea's language has already been noted by several scholars, for example, by Harper (1905a:clxx-clxxiii). However, his argument from this aspect, that we should appreciate the larger and not just the smaller structures of the book of Hosea, will help our understanding of the oracles of Hosea.

### III.2.13 H. Fisch (1988)

In an interesting chapter on 'Hosea: A Poetics of Violence' in his new book on Hebrew poetry, Fisch argues that to understand biblical poetics accurately we should fully appreciate the element of incoherence as a characteristic of 'covenantal discourse'. For a better understanding of this view he takes the book of Hosea as an example, since the book is 'a remarkably "covenantal"



text', and at the same time shows 'a remarkable degree of incoherence'. At the latter point, as in the case of Stuart above, Fisch (138-39; 152-53) seems to understand A/F (70-71) more sympathetically than Wolff, since he agrees with A/F: 'a turbulence in Hosea's thought' (71) may be 'the deliberate result of an artistry far more sophisticated than anything previously suspected' (70).

However, Fisch (153) differs from A/F (636), for instance, in Hos 13:10a, where MT reads **אֶהְיֶה מַלְכָּךְ אֲפֹ**, scholars including A/F have generally read **הֵא** 'where' for **הֵא** 'I will be'. Although Fisch admits that the context requires the reading of **הֵא**, he argues that one can see in v10 'the unsubdued and unsubduable echo' of **וְאֶהְיֶה** 'and I will be (to them like a lion)' in v7.

In connection with this, Fisch (153) argues that, if we read **הֵא** in v10 to 'where' in the light of the context, **הֵא** is also the **הֵא** of God himself: **הֵאֱלֹהִים** appears in the poem. Verse 10 can hence mean: 'Where is your king now, the one you caused to reign in defiance of me? / I will be your King. / I will not be your King for you have brought destruction on yourselves. I will be your king in a way you little expect or desire'.

Fisch accordingly appears to argue that the seeming difficulties in the book of Hosea: complexities of language, disconnected sentences, obscure expressions, words, etc. are due mainly to the quality of Hosea's language - the language of covenant and his typical style of expression, especially his broken, uncertain, contradictory, and inversive sayings, in which many hidden meanings are involved. We therefore should look to Hosea's language, for example, his intense/dense consonantal paronomasia, word play



on Hebrew roots of the names Ephraim and Assur, to understand the cryptic meaning in his sayings (143-46, 151, 153-56).

In short, Fisch's fascinating study should offer useful information for understanding of the text and structure of Hosea (not only in small units but also in larger ones as a whole).

### III.3 Concluding Observations

In the review of the literature on the literary units and structure of the book of Hosea, we noticed various approaches, which have resulted principally from two distinct methods: form criticism and rhetorical criticism. We have noted widely divergent views on the identification of the units of Hos 12-14. The greatest differences of opinion relate to Hos 12, and especially to 12:1-3 and 12:8-13:1. At least one scholar sees a break after v1, and others after v2 or v3; and also after every verse within the unit 12:8-13:1 except 12:8, 13. In Hos 13, opinions are more convergent, with all the named scholars seeing a major break after v8 except Ward, Buss, and Stuart who place it after v11 (Ward; Buss), or v14 (Stuart). There is wide agreement about the units within Hos 13. And the same is even more true of Hos 14.

In the light of this review, I would like to contend that we can more clearly understand the structure and message of Hos 12-14 by analysing the text as discussed in chapter II, according to the principle of rhetorical criticism. This was the name adopted by Muilenburg in his presidential address of 1969 to the Society of Biblical Literature (1969:8). As far as structural analyses

of the book of Hosea are concerned, to date his approach to rhetorical criticism seems a more appropriate method than the others, due mainly to the characteristics of the language of Hosea. As noted above, the features of the language of Hosea have often given interpreters difficulty in discerning either forms or *Sitz im Leben* in the book of Hosea. However, it should be noted that although our primary approach to the structure of Hos 12-14 is rhetorical criticism, we do not have any reason for total avoidance of form criticism, and the latter principle will be applied to the structural analysis of Hos 12-14, when necessary.<sup>1</sup>

As noted earlier, A/F have analysed the book of Hosea according to Hebrew rhetorical devices. The results of our work on the structure of Hos 12-14, however, will differ from those of A/F for two main reasons: 1) our rhetorical analysis of the text of Hos 12-14 is based on the textual criticism discussed above, while A/F have sought to discern the literary texture of the MT which they have before them; 2) the structure of Hos 12-14 should be viewed and analysed not only in terms of small constituent literary units but also larger ones, but A/F seem especially lacking in their failure to give a structural overview of Hos 12-14.

#### III.4 The Aim of Rhetorical Criticism

In recent years renewed attention has been given to rhetorical criticism,

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<sup>1</sup> Cf. Muilenburg (1969:18) concluded his address by saying: 'we affirm the necessity of form criticism, but we also lay claim to the legitimacy of what we have called rhetorical criticism'.



something illustrated especially in studies of the prophetic books.<sup>2</sup> It can be said that a major principle of rhetorical criticism is to distinguish the limits of literary units according to their rhetorical devices, which fashion a text and hence help in delivering its message. For the purpose of a better understanding of the aim of rhetorical criticism in the study of the Old Testament, it would be useful to survey the works of Muilenburg, one of the pioneers of the method, paying particular attention to his presidential address (1969:1-18) delivered to the Society of Biblical Literature at the University of California, Berkeley, December 1968.

His call for rhetorical criticism can be regarded as a summary of the results of his long scholarship and his sensitivity to rhetorical features in the Bible.<sup>3</sup> Muilenburg (1969:8) describes rhetoric as defined not only in terms of style but also more importantly in those of structure:

What I am interested in, above all, is in understanding the nature of Hebrew literary composition, in exhibiting the structural patterns that are employed for the fashioning of a literary unit, whether in poetry or in prose, and in discerning the many and various devices by which the predications are formulated and ordered into a unified whole. Such an enterprise I should describe as rhetoric and the methodology as rhetorical criticism.

Muilenburg has hence been interested in discovering how a particular literary unit is fashioned by means of 'structural patterns'. He laid stress on

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<sup>2</sup> For example, on Hosea, see the review of the above literature on Hosea, especially by A/F(1980); on Isaiah, Gitay (1981); Jackson (1974); Sacon (1974); Fisher (1974); Holmgren (1974); on Amos, Gitay (1980); on Jeremiah, Lundbom (1975); Holladay (1976); Brueggemann (1974); Raitt (1974); on Jonah, Walsh (1982); on Ezekiel, Boadt (1980); on Habakkuk, Walker and Lund (1934).

<sup>3</sup> Cf. Muilenburg in the bibliography.



two major concerns of the rhetorical critic as follows:

1) He argued that we call for rhetorical criticism 'to define the limits or scope of the literary unit, to recognize precisely where and how it begins and where and how it ends' (8-9). He accordingly suggested the following two clues for determining larger units: A) 'the presence of climactic or ballast lines', and B) inclusion<sup>4</sup> or ring composition (9).

2) He called for a note of 'the various rhetorical devices that are employed for marking, ---, the sequence and movement of the pericope, and ---, the shifts or breaks in the development of the writer's thought' (10). He suggested basic elements of the structural features of Hebrew rhetoric which delineate the form and structure of units and serve a structural function, as follows:

A) The different forms of parallelism, which are basic and most elemental to understand structural features of Hebrew poetic compositions.

B) Clusters or groups of bicola or tricola, which he called 'strophes' (11-12). According to him, they can readily be recognized in refrains as in Amos (4:6-11), Isaiah (9:7-20; 5:25-30), and in Psalms (9, 10, 25, 42-43, 46, 107, 119).

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<sup>4</sup> For instance, the study of Lundbom on Jeremiah (1975) demonstrates the significance of the inclusion by fuller analyses, in which he (17) argues that 'the inclusio is the surest way to delimit the speech, by definition, it ties the end together with the beginning'; for other studies of inclusion, see Adri van der Wal (1983); and also Holladay (1976:169); Lundbom (1971:65).

C) The various usage of particles, for example, the deictic and emphatic particle כִּי (cf. Muilenburg (1961); Wolff (1974:135)); הֵן or הֵנָּה; לָכֵן (cf. March (1974b)); וְעַתָּה; לָמָּה. In the introduction to his previous work on the Hebrew particle כִּי, Muilenburg (1961:135) commented on the Hebrew particles in general as follows:

Among the Hebrew particles there is one group that plays a distinctive lexical and rhetorical role. They are the signals and sign-posts of language, markers on the way of the sentence or poem or narrative, guides to the progress of words, arrows directing what is being spoken to its destination. They serve to indicate how words are disposed into the fabric or texture of speech, how the literary types are fashioned into connected wholes. They confirm or establish or stress what is being said, or underline and give notice to what is about to be said, or mark the goal or climax of what has been said. They are by no means static linguistic entities, morphemes to be scrutinized independently of their contexts, but are rather agents of movement. The intended meaning becomes alive and dynamic in the ways that the particles are employed. Whether negations, affirmations, interrogatives, interjections, or instruments of connection, they perform their work in many different ways and wear many guises. Their meaning is often contingent upon the particular function they seek to serve, so that the same word may be rendered quite differently in the same context. Without an understanding of their precise function not only are the nuances of a text often obscured, but the articulation and accents of the thought are also lost to view.

Muilenburg (1969:13-15) has thus laid stress on the rhetorical role of Hebrew particles in Hebrew rhetoric: there is not only a lexical function but also a rhetorical one.

D) The vocatives addressed to God in the invocations as in Psalms (7:2[1]a, 4[3]a, 7[6]a; 8:2[1], 10[9]; 15:1).

E) Rhetorical questions as in Jeremiah (2:5, 29; 4:21; 8:22).



F) The repetition of key words in units as in Isa 60:1-3; Gen 12:1-3; Hos 1:2; 2:21-22[19-20]; Ezek 1:26. In his earlier essay, Muilenburg (1953:99) had already emphasised the diverse functions of word repetition in the literary compositions of Hebrew rhetoric as follows:

Repetition plays a diverse role in the Old Testament. It serves, for one thing, to centre the thought, to rescue it from disparateness and diffuseness, to focus the richness of varied predication upon the poet's controlling concern. The synthetic character of biblical mentality, its sense for totality, is as apparent in Israel's rhetoric as in her psychology. Repetition serves, too, to give continuity to the writer's thought; the repeated word or phrase is often strategically located, thus providing a clue to the movement and stress of the poem. Sometimes the repeated word or line indicates the structure of the poem, pointing to the separate divisions; at other times it may guide us in determining the extent of the literary unit. Our commentaries contain numerous instances where words and phrases have been deleted as mere repetition. It is a highly precarious procedure, one which violates the character of biblical writing, both prose and poetry, and is refuted quite decisively by the other extant literatures of the Near East, above all, perhaps, by the Ugaritic epics, which cast a strong light on the method and mentality of ancient semitic thinking and literary composition. Finally, repetition provides us with an open avenue to the character of biblical thinking.

His case on the repetition of key words has been expanded fully in his study of Second Isaiah, in which Muilenburg (1956:389) noted the use of repetition by Second Isaiah as 'one of first importance for an understanding and appreciation of the poems'. He illustrated the various usages of repetitions in Second Isaiah as follows: repetition of single words; of particles, etc., in immediate context; of single words or phrases in immediate context; of several different words in immediate context; of words at the beginning of lines; threefold repetition of a single word within a strophe; repetitions in chiasmic arrangement; repetitions at the beginnings of successive or



neighboring strophes; repetition of key words throughout a poem; of crucial clauses; of major motifs throughout the collection.

These literary phenomena occur, Muilenburg (1959:389) notes, not only in Second Isaiah but also in much of the Old Testament. In this connection, in terms of word repetitions, Hosea is not an exception: the following are good examples:

*And I will betroth you to me for ever; I will betroth you to me in righteousness and in justice, and in steadfast love and in mercy. I will betroth you to me in faithfulness. Then you shall know Yahweh. (2:21-22[19-20])*

*'And in that day, I will answer,<sup>5</sup> says Yahweh, I will answer the heavens and they shall answer the earth; and the earth shall answer the grain, the wine, and the oil, and they shall answer Jezreel.' (2:23-24[21-22])*

*And Yahweh said to me again, 'Go, love a woman who loves a partner and is an adulteress; even as Yahweh loves the people of Israel, though they turn to other gods and love cakes of raisins'.<sup>6</sup> (3:1)*

According to Muilenburg (1969:18), we can only recognize such word repetitions as literary devices through careful examination; the Old Testament is full of linguistic patterns, word formulations, and verbal sequences. All these phenomena display skilful and artistic literary styles, which can be identified through paying close attention to rhetorical devices and their functions in the Old Testament.

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<sup>5</sup> RSV deletes 'I will answer', which should be retained, however, given the importance of the fivefold repetition of the word אָנָּה 'to answer' in vv23-24[21-22].

<sup>6</sup> On this rendering, see IV.7.1.3:1 below.

Our survey of Muilenburg's works on rhetorical criticism leads to the following conclusion: where a structural analysis of Hos 12-14 through recognition of the various rhetorical devices in the text is intended, his two main concerns require detailed discussion: 1) the demarcation of the constituent literary units of Hos 12-14; and 2) the connection of those units with each other, and to the whole Hos 12-14. In connection with this, it should be noted that although determining overall structure is generally recognised as a major problem for an interpreter, so far as I have been aware, no detailed studies which consider a structural overview of Hos 12-14 have appeared. This is mainly because of the variety of material involved. The question of overall structure should therefore be one of our main concerns.

For the purpose of this present study, we will use the terms for Hebrew poetic units which were set forth by Lundbom (1975:20) and Polan (1986:11) as follows: *word*: the basic unit of thought in Hebrew including its prefixes, suffixes, and sometimes such articles with maqqeph as -אֵל, -לֵךְ, etc.; *colon*: a single line of poetry which has usually two or three words; *bicolon*: a line of two cola; *tricolon*: a line of three cola; *stanza*: a group of bicola or tricola. Although we generally follow the approach of Muilenburg, and several scholars use *strophe* with basically the same meaning as our *stanza*,<sup>7</sup> we employ *stanza* instead of *strophe*. Muilenburg (1969:12) defines a strophe as 'a series of bicola or tricola with a beginning and ending, possessing unity of thought and structure'; and he regards the strophe as 'the most common designation'. At the same time, he notes objections raised by scholars to

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<sup>7</sup> Cf. Polan (1986:11).



the terminology, since it is drawn from the models of Greek lyrical verse and is to be understood as having metrical consistency. So, it seems best to use the term *stanza* instead of *strophe* primarily because of Hosea's characteristically irregular use of the Hebrew poetic forms.

### III.5 Structural Overview of the Book of Hosea

For the aim of the present study of the structural analysis of Hos 12-14, it would be appropriate to begin with the overview of the larger division of the whole book of Hosea 1-14, since 1) Hos 12-14 is one section of a larger editorial composition; and 2) we should identify constituent literary units of the book not only in its microstructures but also in its macrostructures.

#### III.5.1 Hosea 1-3; 4-14

We may begin our discussion of the overall structure of the book of Hosea by considering the almost unanimous agreement that the book is divided into two parts: Hos 1-3; 4-14. The main arguments for the division of Hos 1-3; 4-14 are as follows:

1) Hos 1-3 deals with the story of marriage: Hosea's marriage to an unfaithful wife in Hos 1, 3; Yahweh's marriage to Israel in Hos 2. In Hos 4-14, the imagery of marriage does not occur.

2) Hos 1-3 is primarily composed of narrative about Hosea, whilst Hos 4-14 has few personal references, and is a collection of the material of Hosea's oracles related by motifs, setting, style, and words, etc.



3) In both content and chronology there is a general shift from Israel's guilt and her consequent judgment to her salvation, not only in Hos 1-3 (Hos 1-2 // 3) but also in Hos 4-14 (Hos 4-10, 12-13 // 11, 14).

4) Hos 1-3 is introduced by **דבר יהוה** 'the word of Yahweh' in Hos 1:1, and Hos 4-14 also begins with **דבר יהוה** in Hos 4:1. The phrase occurs only twice in Hosea, indicating that the book has two parts: Hos 1-3; 4-14.

5) In Hosea, 'Ephraim' occurs thirty-seven times: not at all in Hos 1-3, but in every chapter of Hos 4-14.<sup>1</sup> The frequency of 'Ephraim' in Hosea is striking when it is considered that his contemporary Amos does not use it at all. Wolff (1974:5, 91) supposes Ephraim is Hosea's home area, where he delivered the majority of his public addresses. Rather Hosea seems to have employed 'Ephraim' for the sake of a word play: 'Ephraim' basically means prosperity,<sup>2</sup> but her involvement with Baal, the god of fertility, led to her infertility. The fertility of Ephraim is to stem from Yahweh, not Baal. A detailed discussion will follow later.

6) It is generally known that the particles **אֵל** and **אֲשֶׁר** and the definite article **הַ** are 'typical of Hebrew prose and atypical in Hebrew poetry'.<sup>3</sup> According to this common position, Hos 1-3 contains more prose than Hos

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<sup>1</sup> 4:17; 5:3 (x2), 5, 9, 11, 12, 13 (x2), 14; 6:4, 10; 7:1, 8 (x2), 11; 8:9, 11; 9:3, 8, 11, 13 (x2), 16; 10:6, 11 (x2); 11:3, 8, 9; 12:1[11:12], 2, 9, 15[1, 8, 14]; 13:1, 12; 14:9[8].

<sup>2</sup> Cf. Fisch (1988:146-148).

<sup>3</sup> A/F (1980:60); see further on this point Stuart (1987:9).

4-14, while the latter is generally more poetic than the former. In particular, Hos 12-14 contains more poetry than Hos 4-11 and especially Hos 1-3: since, for example, the particle  $\text{וְ}$  occurs only twice in Hos 12-14 in 12:4[3], whilst it appears twenty-three times in Hos 1-3,<sup>4</sup> and thirteen times in Hos 4-11.<sup>5</sup> A/F (60-64) note that in standard prose, the frequency patterns of these particles and article is 15 per cent or more of all words, whilst in poetry it is 5 per cent or less. In the case of Hosea, the frequency of Hos 1-14 is 4.8 %, while that of Hos 1-3 is 11.0 %; Hos 4-14 is 3.0 %, and Hos 12-14 is 2.5 %. Their summary is that Hos 1-3 is 'much closer to the prose end of the scale with an 11 per cent frequency', whilst Hos 4-14 is 'closer to the poetry end of the scale: about 3 per cent', and 'the most "poetic" of all prophetic writings' (132).

### III.5.2 Hosea 4-11; 12-14

On the other hand, as noted in the Introduction to this thesis, recently a majority of scholars has thought that there is a major break between Hos 4-11 and 12-14. A principal argument for a division into Hos 4-11 and Hos 12-14 is that the divine formula  $\text{וְהוֹרָא אֵלֹהִים}$  'oracle of Yahweh' serves to end the section of Hos 4-11, and hence a new section begins at Hos 12:1[11:12].  $\text{וְהוֹרָא אֵלֹהִים}$  appears particularly frequently in the book of Jeremiah. In the prophet Amos, the contemporary of Hosea, the formula occurs fourteen

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<sup>4</sup> 1:3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8; 2:6, 8, 9, 11, 12, 17 (x2), 19, 23, 24 (x4), 25[4, 6, 7, 9, 10, 15, 17, 21, 22, 23]; 3:1, 5.

<sup>5</sup> 4:10; 5:4, 6, 7, 13 (x2); 6:3; 7:5, 7; 8:14; 9:12; 10:3, 12. In the light of the particle frequency in this list, that given in A/F's tabulated statistics (63) appears to require modification: 4:4-19: 2 becomes 1; 7:3-7: 1 becomes 2; 10:1-8: 2 becomes 1; 12:1-15: 3 becomes 2.



times (MT),<sup>6</sup> whilst it appears only four times in Hosea (2:15, 18, 23[13, 16, 21]; 11:11). In 2:18, 23, the formula occurs in the middle of the oracle and serves to introduce further oracles. Scholars, however, differ concerning the usage of the formula in 2:15; 11:11. For instance, Wolff (1974:30-45) regards 2:4-17 as a unit, whilst A/F (262) note the formula in 2:15 completes the unit 2:4-15. And as for the formula in 11:11, Wolff (1974:40-41, 202-203) notes it concludes the rhetorical unit 4:1-11:11, since the formula does not occur elsewhere in Hos 4:1-11:11, and 'ch 12 begins as though ch 11 does not exist'. On the other hand, although they also think that the new section begins at 12:1, A/F (314) have a rather different point of view on the formula from that of Wolff: 'Hos 11:11 may mark the end of a piece of discourse that begins at 4:1. Even so, it must be admitted that, if the "Oracle of Yahweh" formula were not present, a clear break at this point would not be obvious, for the discourse continues in characteristic fashion'.

In the light of the analysis of the oracle formula **נאם יהוה**, we seem to be able to identify the characteristics of the formula in Hosea as follows:

1) The formula does not always serve to separate a unit from the one that follows: the function of the formula depends on the context of each saying in which it occurs.

2) Whether the formula functions to mark a unit or not, its main function

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<sup>6</sup> 2:11, 16[9, 14]; 3:10, 15; 4:3; 9:7, 8, 12, 13; cf. **נאם אדני יהוה** 'oracle of the LORD of Yahweh' in 3:13; 4:5; 8:3; and **נאם יהוה אלהי הצבאות** 'oracle of Yahweh God of the Hosts' in 6:8, 14. The oracle formula in 6:8, 14 is lacking in LXX.



is to emphasise that the oracles around the formula are the words of Yahweh. In connection with this, the rare use of the formula in contrast to pervasive use of the form of the first person of divine speech (e.g. 2:4[2]ff.; 4:1-14; 5:1-15; 11:1ff.) suggests that it might have been added by a redactor who wished to stress that the oracles of Hos 4-11 or of Hos 11:1-11 are the words of Yahweh.<sup>7</sup> As far as the continuity/discontinuity between Hos 11:11 and Hos 12:1ff. is concerned, I feel sympathetic to Wolff's discontinuity rather than A/F's continuity. The formula in 11:11 seems to be used for the division of 11:11/12:1; as noted above, the formula occurs three times in Hos 2, and after its long absence, it recurs in 11:11, and does not occur any more. So, the formula in 11:11 is considered significant, positioned in a strategic place (11:11), and thus helps in marking off two sections of Hos 4-14: 4-11; 12-14.

When we regard both 1:1 and 14:10[9] as a kind of introduction and conclusion to the book of Hosea, both of which stand outside the main structure, our overall analysis yields a very basic structure for the book as a whole. This may be outlined as follows:

1:1: The title

1:2-3:5: Part I (Hosea's marriage)

4:1-14:9: Part II (Hosea's oracles)

4:1-11:11: Section I

12:1-14:9: Section II

14:10: The conclusion

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<sup>7</sup> Cf. Wolff (1974:41; 202) notes that especially the formula in 11:11 is 'probably' a redactional addition, more so than the others.

### III.6 The Literary Unity of the Book of Hosea

It now remains to examine how these parts and sections are connected with each other to form the book of Hosea as a literary whole. We suggested in the Introduction to this thesis the hierarchical terminology we would use to plot the book's structure, according to decreasing size of its literary units: book - part - section - sub-section - unit - verse. So my arguments for the literary unity of the book of Hosea, and of Hos 12-14 are that recurring words, phrases, and lines within, between, and among oracles in question serve to unite verses to establish a unit, then units to a sub-section, sub-sections to a section, sections to a part, parts to the book as a literary whole. Several similar rhetorical studies of prophetic books have recently been published, including the following:

- 1) G.J.Polan (1986) divided Is 56-59 into the literary units of the section: 56:1-8; 56:9-57:21; 58:1-14; 59:1-20, and tried to establish Is 56-59 as a literary unity by an analysis of patterns of repeated vocabulary (pp.17-34).
- 2) I.J.Ball, Jr. (1988), after discussing textual criticism and exegetical studies of each of the three chapters of Zephaniah, tried to examine in the Conclusion to his thesis the structure of the book of Zephaniah as a whole, discovering 1) the rhetorical devices which unite the book; and 2) the relationships which exist between the parts (pp.281-285).
- 3) D.G.Hagstrom (1988) suggests the following structural outline of the book of Micah: I. chs 1-5 (A. 1-3 [1-2/3]; B. 4-5); II. chs 6-7 (A. 6:1-7:6 [6:1-8/6:9-7:6]; B. 7:7-20). His argument for his thesis is as follows: "The



book of Micah in its final form is so shaped as to render the book a unified, coherent whole; that is, the individual units of Micah are so shaped, structured, and linked together as to make it possible to read the book as a unit' (p.1).

### III.6.1 The Relationship of Hosea 4-11 to 12-14

We may begin our discussion with the relationship of section I (Hos 4-11) to section II (Hos 12-14) in part II of Hosea, since they are closer in both content and style than is Hos 1-3 to Hos 4-11/12-14. With this aim, it would be appropriate to consider the repetitions of words, phrases and lines occurring in both 4-11 and 12-14, to examine the nature of any link between 4-11 and 12-14.

The repetition of words or phrases or lines is, as noted above, one of the important principles of Muilenburg's approach to the structure of a poem - important in determining the extent of a literary unit.<sup>8</sup> Therefore, most of the structural analysis presented in the present study will be built on the observed presence of word repetitions. In this connection, as far as the demonstration of the relationship between individual literary units is concerned, the repetition of words or phrases or lines between literary units alone could not serve to demonstrate a connection between these units. In

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<sup>8</sup> Cf. for example, Buss (1969) also emphasises the significance of word repetitions in poetry: two most important features in poetry are repetition and vividness (3); repetition is the most important among the rhetorical devices of poetry (38); and in the case of narrative, A/F (133) give similar importance to word repetition: 'one of the devices most frequently used in the narrative is the repetition of key words or ideas.'

this sense, as Muilenburg (1953:99) noted: 'repetition serves --- to give continuity to the writer's thought', the recurring words or phrases or lines should express consistent motifs or themes throughout, and give, depending on context and intention, meaning either identical, similar or possibly contrasting. In terms of the repetition of words, phrases, or lines, we now proceed to probe the relationship of Hos 4-11 and 12-14. We can argue for the relationship of these two sections on the following grounds:

1) As noted earlier, the fact that 'Ephraim' occurs in every chapter of Hos 4-14 in striking contrast to its absence in Hos 1-3 is to be regarded as a strong indication for the connection of 4-11 to 12-14.

2) The clause **יָשִׁיב לוֹ** 'he will return/repay him' occurs three times in Hosea in 4:9; 12:3, 15[2, 14]:

Then it shall be like the people, like the priest;  
I will punish him for his ways,  
and return to him (**יָשִׁיב לוֹ**) his deeds. (4:9)

Yahweh has a dispute with Israel,  
to punish Jacob according to his ways;  
according to his deeds he will repay him (**יָשִׁיב לוֹ**) (12:3)

Ephraim has given bitter provocation.  
He will leave his bloodguilt on him.  
His LORD will return to him (**יָשִׁיב לוֹ**) his reproach. (12:15)

In the context of Yahweh's accusation against the priesthood in 4:4-10, v9 threatens the priests with the principal responsibility, and thus the guilt, for the people's lack of knowledge of God (cf. v5), which led to their destruction. The phrase **יָשִׁיב לוֹ** in 4:9 serves to emphasise the corresponding punishment of the priests' guilt. As in 4:9, the phrase in 12:3



is used to stress the suitable punishment of contemporary Israel's iniquities, in similarity to the situation of her ancestor Jacob. In 12:15, by the repetition of the phrase, Yahweh as judge, confirms his matching punishment of present Israel which he previously announced in v3. The threefold use of the phrase *שוב לו* 'to return/repay him' in 4:9; 12:3, 15 thus links 4-11 to 12-14.

3) The line *בענן בקר ובטל משנים הלך* occurs in Hosea only in 6:4b ('(Your love is) *like morning mist, and like dew that goes away early*') and in 13:3a ('(Therefore they will be) *like morning mist, and like dew that goes away early*'). The line in 6:4b and 13:3a is consistent in its motif: since Ephraim's love to Yahweh is *like morning mist, and like dew that goes away early* (6:4b), they will *soon* disappear by his punishment like their transitory love to him (13:3a). So, the repetition of the line in 6:4b, in 13:3a alone, with its consistent motif of Ephraim's fleeting love to Yahweh and his corresponding punishment of her serves to relate Hos 4-11 to 12-14.

4) The phrase *על תלמי שרי* 'on the furrows of the field' occurs only in Hosea, in 10:4; 12:12[11]:

They utter words;  
They swear false oaths. They make covenants.  
So judgment spreads like poisonous weeds  
on the furrows of the field (*על תלמי שרי*). (10:4)

If Gilead be evil,  
they surely have become worthless.  
In Gilgal they sacrificed bulls.  
So their altars were like stone heaps  
on the furrows of the field (*על תלמי שרי*). (12:12)

Hos 10:4 states that, as a result of Israel's corruptness, her empty words,

false oaths, and making covenants, judgment (משפט), which she should keep, has turned to injustice like poisonous weeds in the furrows of the field. As hurtful weeds are to be pulled up by the roots, so Israel will be punished. In 12:12, Hosea condemns Israel of cultic perversion at Gilead and Gilgal, and announces Yahweh's punishment: in v12b, the altars at Gilgal became like stone heaps on the furrows of the field. As the stone heaps are to be cleared by farmers for ploughing, the guilty Israel is to be punished. The twofold use of the phrase על תלמי שרי in 10:4; 12:12 in the context of Yahweh's punishment of Israel thus connects 4-11 to 12-14.

The repetitions of אפרים (every chapter of Hos 4-14), שוב לו (4:9; 12:3, 15), בקר ובטל שבים הלך (6:4b, 13:3a), and על תלמי שרי (10:4; 12:12); and the consistent theme that, as a result of their iniquities, Ephraim will in a short time be destroyed, therefore, act as a link between Hos 4-11 to 12-14.

### III.6.2 The Relationship of Hosea 1-3 to 4-14

As in the discussion of the connection of section I (Hos 4-11) to section II (Hos 12-14), the relationship of part I (Hos 1-3) to part two (Hos 4-14) can be appropriately treated through identification of the words, phrases, and lines repeated in these two parts.

1) רבר יהוה 'the word of Yahweh' in 1:1 only appears again in Hosea, in 4:1. As already noted above, the phrase in Hos 1:1 serves as a sign of introduction to the entire book, whilst that in Hos 4:1 functions as a title of Hos 4-14. On the other hand, the phrase רבר יהוה 'spoke Yahweh' occurs in 1:2a, which may serve to mark the beginning of the following narrative



1:2b-3:5.<sup>9</sup> In relation to these three occurrences of the phrase דבר יהוה (1:1, 2; 4:1), we may suppose that the phrase דבר יהוה was first used in 4:1a, since it occurred in the direct sayings of Hosea: שמעו דבר יהוה בני ישראל 'Hear *the word of Yahweh*, O people of Israel'. Later the related דבר יהוה may have been used in 1:2a (וַיֹּאמֶר יְהוָה אֶל הוֹשֵׁעַ 'When Yahweh first spoke through Hosea, Yahweh said to Hosea'), since 1:2a is followed by the divine oracle and narrative (1:2bff.); and finally the phrase דבר יהוה in 1:1 may have been used in 1:1a to serve as part of the introduction to the book.<sup>10</sup>

2) At the very beginning of his oracles in Hos 1-3, Hosea repeated the term זנה 'to play the harlot' four times:

The beginning of Yahweh's speaking through Hosea: Yahweh said to Hosea. 'Go, take for yourself a *harlotrous* wife and get *harlotrous* children, for the land *has surely committed harlotry*<sup>11</sup> away from Yahweh.' (1:2)

The term זנה hence supplies a strong motif for Hosea: in the book as a whole, the word appears twenty-three times,<sup>12</sup> serving to connect Hos 1-3 to 4-14.

3) The phrase בני ישראל 'the sons of Israel' appears five times in Hos 1-3 (2:1, 2[1:10, 11]; 3:1, 4, 5); and once in 4:1. It may have been considered

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<sup>9</sup> Cf. Mays (1969:24); Wolff (1974:12); A/F (149-155).

<sup>10</sup> Cf. for a general discussion of the content and structure of the headings of the eighth-century prophets, see A/F (143-149); Freedman (1987).

<sup>11</sup> Cf. זנה תזנה in the MT.

<sup>12</sup> (1:2 (x4); 2:4, 6, 7[2, 4, 5]; 3:3; 4:10, 11, 12 (x2), 13, 14 (x2), 15, 18 (x2); 5:3 (x2); 6:10; 7:17; 9:1.

suitable for use in Hos 1-3, because it was already familiar, occurring at the very beginning of his preaching to the Israelites (4:1). In this sense, the sixfold use of the phrase (2:1, 2; 3:1, 4, 5; 4:1) provides a connection between Hos 1-3 and Hos 4-14.<sup>1</sup>

4) Both 2:20[18] and 4:3 seem to be a strong indication of the relationship between Hos 1-3 and 4-14, since the double pair of the phrases חַיַּת הַשָּׂדֶה 'the beasts of the field' (2:14, 20[12, 18]; 4:3; 13:8) and עוֹף הַשָּׁמַיִם 'the birds of the air' (2:20; 4:3; 7:12) occur in these two verses:

And I will make for them a covenant on that day with *the beasts of the field*, with *the birds of the air*, and the creeping things of the ground; and I will break bow and sword and war from the land; and I will make them lie down in safety. (2:20)

Therefore the land shall dry up,  
and all who live in it shall pine away,  
with *the beasts of the field*, and with *the birds of the air*;  
and even the fish of the sea shall be swept away. (4:3)

In 4:3, Hosea announces that, as a consequence of Israel's breaking a covenant, every creature including 'the beasts of the field' and 'the birds of the air' will be ruined in the judgment of Yahweh, whilst in 2:20, in the time of restoration Yahweh will make a covenant with all living creatures including 'the beasts of the field' and 'the birds of the air' for the sake of Israel. The life and death of every creature therefore depends on the relationship between Yahweh and Israel. The recurrence of the double pair of the phrase and their consistency in the theme in both 2:10[18] and 4:3 hence serve to link Hos 1-3 to 4-14.

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<sup>1</sup> Cf. A/F (336).



5) The five terms: חסד 'steadfast love',<sup>2</sup> אמן 'to be faithful',<sup>3</sup> ידע 'to know',<sup>4</sup> שוב (qal) 'to return',<sup>5</sup> (hiph) 'to return/repay',<sup>6</sup> and אהב 'to love',<sup>7</sup> contribute to the linkage of Hos 1-3 to 4-14, since for Hosea they represent the basic elements of the relationship between Yahweh and Israel in Hosea,<sup>8</sup> and they occur repeatedly, both in Hos 1-3 and 4-14.

The repetition of the words (זנה 'to play the harlot', חסד 'steadfast love', אמן 'to be faithful', ידע 'to know', שוב 'to return', and אהב 'to love'), and of the phrases (דבר יהוה 'the word of Yahweh', בני ישראל 'the sons of Israel', חית השדה 'the beasts of the field', עוף השמים 'the birds of the air'), therefore, connects Hos 1-3 to 4-14.

Our discussion now turns to see if an overall structure can be identified in Hos 12-14.

### III.7 Structural Overview of Hosea 12-14

For the purpose of the identification of the structure of Hos 12-14, we may begin with the discussion of the delimitation of coherent sub-sections of

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<sup>2</sup> 2:21[19]; 4:1; 6:4, 6; 10:12; 12:7[6].

<sup>3</sup> 2:22[20]; 4:1; 5:9; 12:1[11:12].

<sup>4</sup> 2:10, 22[8, 20]; 4:1, 6 (x2); 5:3, 4, 9; 6:3 (x2), 6; 7:9 (x2); 8:2, 4; 9:7; 11:3; 13:4; 14:10[9].

<sup>5</sup> 2:9, 11[7, 9]; 3:5; 5:4, 15; 6:1, 11; 7:10, 16; 8:13; 9:3; 11:5 (x2), 7; 12:7[6]; 14:2, 3, 5 (x2), 8 [1, 2, 4, 7].

<sup>6</sup> 4:9; 12:3, 15[2, 14].

<sup>7</sup> 2:7, 9, 12, 14, 15[5, 7, 10, 12, 13]; 3:1 (x4); 4:18; 8:9; 9:1, 10, 15; 10:11; 11:1, 4; 12:8[7]; 14:5[4].

<sup>8</sup> For a significant role and meaning of ידע, שוב, and אהב in Hosea, see the discussion in ch IV below; for חסד, and אמן, see, for example, Wolff (1974:52-53, 67); Mays (1969:51-52; 62-64); A/F (282-284, 336).

Hos 12-14. This is followed by consideration of their connection with each other to ascertain if Hos 12-14 is a literary unity. Subsequently, the small literary units within the three sub-sections can be identified and examined; and their own inter-connections will be discussed in order to determine how they relate to one another in constructing sub-sections in Hos 12-14. With these aims, various rhetorical devices such as the repetition of key words, phrases, and lines, inclusion, and parallelism in both small units and sub-sections of Hos 12-14 will be identified, as previously.

### III.7.1 The Unit Hosea 12:1-15

The sub-section of Hos 12 can be separated from both Hos 11 and 13:1-14:1 on the following grounds:

- 1) The term מרמה 'falsehood' appears in Hosea only in Hos 12:1, 8. The term מרמה in 12:1a ('the house of Israel with *falsehood*'), recurs in Hos 12:8a ('Canaan, in his hands are *false* scales'), echoes תמרורים 'bitterness' ('Ephraim has given *bitter* provocation') by the repeated מ and ר assonance in 12:15.<sup>9</sup> In this connection, Hos 12 is replete with terms which refer to Ephraim's

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<sup>9</sup> Another examples of assonance in Hosea are as follows: 5:11a: עשוק אפרים 'Ephraim is *oppressed, crushed* in judgment'; 8:7b: קמה אין לו צמח בלי יעשה-קמח 'The *standing grain* has no *heads*, it shall yield no *meal*'; 12:2[1]a: אפרים רעה רוח ורעה קרים כל-היום 'Ephraim *feeds the wind, he pursues* the east wind all day long'. Muilenburg (1956:387) illustrates various kinds of assonance in Isa 53:1-9 as follows: onomatopoeia, paronomasia, alliteration, approximations to rhyme, dominance of a single sound throughout a line, two successive words with similar sounds, and lines beginning and ending with the same sound; for other studies of assonance, see also Lundbom (1975:63f.); Polan (1986:118, 127, 148, 157, 267).



falsehood: מרמה 'falsehood' (vv1, 8); עקב 'to cheat' (v4); עון 'guilt' (v9); און 'evil' (v12), בעס 'to provoke' (v15). The twofold use of -מר- in 12:1, 8, 15 (by assonance), and the associated consistent theme that Ephraim's falsehood has given bitter provocation hence completes Hos 12.

2) The following two sets of words have varying influence on the sub-section Hos 12:

A) Words which occur only in Hos 12, and not elsewhere in Hosea. These words seem to serve to separate Hos 12 from what precedes and follows, and define its particular themes. As Polan (1986:28) notes, 'Single uses of vocabulary and unique expressions in a literary context provide an avenue for discovering vehicles of creative expression.' In his study of the structure of Jeremiah 1-20, Holladay (1974:25-26) similarly comments: 'A good many of the words and phrases that I shall identify as rhetorical tags are unique to the material.'<sup>10</sup> Hebrew verse numbers are followed throughout these lists:

ארניו	'his LORD' (v15).
אראם	'Aram' (v13).
בכה	'to weep' (v5).
ברח	'to flee' (v13).
גלל	'stone heaps' (v12).
חנן	'to seek a favour' (v5).
חרף	'to reproach' (v15).
כנען	'Canaan' (v8).
בעס	'to give a provocation' (v15).
מאזני	'the scales of' (v8).
מלאך	'angel' (v5).

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<sup>10</sup> Cf. for a detailed analysis of the instances of the repetition of key words or ideas in Hos 1-3, see A/F (133-139).

מרמה	'falsehood' (vv1, 8).
מרר	'bitter' (v15).
נטש	'to leave' (v15).
עבר	'to serve' (v13).
עשר	'to become rich' (v9).
צבא	'host' (v6).
שרה	'to contend' (vv4, 5).
שור	'bull' (v12).
תמיד	'continually' (v7).

B) Words which appear in Hos 12, occur in part in Hos 1-10, but do not recur in Hos 11 and 13:1-14:10. These words may serve not only to identify the sub-section Hos 12<sup>11</sup> but also to connect it to Hos 1-10, since Hos 11 and 13:1-14:10 are the sub-sections before and after Hos 12; and the words are consistent in meaning in the adjoining passages. For the purposes of the present study, verse numbers of Hos 12-14 are followed by those of Hos 1-11:

		<u>Hos 12</u>	<u>Hos 1-3</u>	<u>Hos 4-10</u>
און	'wickedness'	vv4, 9, 12		6:8; 9:4; 10:8
אך	'indeed, surely'	vv9, 12		4:4
אמן	'truth'	v1	2:22	4:1; 5:9
בטן	'womb'	v4		9:11, 16
בית אל	'Bethel'	v5		10:15
ברית	'covenant'	v2	2:20	6:7; 8:1; 10:4
גלגל	'Gilgal'	v12		4:15; 9:15
גלעד	'Gilead'	v12		6:8
דם	'blood'	v15	1:4	4:2 (x2); 6:8
חסד	'steadfast love'	v7	2:21	4:1; 6:4, 6; 10:12
יבל	'to bring'	v2		10:6
יעקב	'Jacob'	vv3, 13		10:11
כזב	'lies'	v2		7:13
כחש	'deception'	v1		4:2; 7:3; 9:2; 10:13
כרת	'to cut'	v2	2:20	10:4
מועד	'meeting'	v10	2:11, 13	9:5
משפט	'justice'	v7	2:21	5:1, 11; 6:5; 10:4
נביא	'prophet'	vv11 (x2), 14 (x2)		4:15; 6:5; 9:7, 8
עקב	'to take'	v4		6:8

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<sup>11</sup> Cf. Ward (1981:93-95); Hubbard (1989:201-202).



עשק	'to oppress'	v8		5:11
פקד	'to punish'	v3	1:4; 2:15	4:9, 14; 8:13; 9:7, 9
קוה	'to wait'	v7	2:17	
רבה	'to multiply'	vv2, 11	2:10	8:11, 14; 9:7; 10:1
רדף	'to pursue'	v2	2:9	6:3; 8:3
ריב	'to dispute'	v3	2:4 (x2)	4:1
שרה	'field'	v12		10:4
שר	'destruction'	v2		7:13; 9:6; 10:14
שוא	'worthless'	v12		10:4
שמן	'oil'	v2	2:7	
תלם	'furrow'	v12		10:4

### III.7.2 The Unit Hosea 13:1-14:1

Our discussion now turns to the identification of the large literary sub-section of Hos 13:1-14:1[13:16], which can be distinguished from Hos 12 and 14:2-9[1-8] for the following reasons:

1) As noted above, while the main theme of Hos 12 is Hosea's reproach against Ephraim's deceit (מרמה in 12:1, 8, and cf. תמרורים in 12:15), producing Yahweh's punishment (ישיב לו in vv3, 15), Hos 13:1 begins with a completely different theme: Ephraim's sin of idolatry (vv1-3) and of forgetting Yahweh (vv4-6) invites an inevitable punishment (vv7-14:1[13:16]).

2) 'Ephraim' (he) in 13:1 matches שמרון 'Samaria' (she) in 14:1<sup>1</sup>: Ephraim and Samaria are the front and back of an 'envelope' round 13:1-14:1. It is Samaria that completes the chapter; this may indicate that Samaria, as the capital city, is more responsible for Ephraim's guilt against Yahweh than any other city in the Northern Kingdom.

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<sup>1</sup> Cf. A/F (626).

3) חָשַׁן 'to become guilty' occurs only in 13:1; 14:1 within Hos 12-14.<sup>2</sup> The repeated חָשַׁן in 13:1; 14:1 serves as a form of inclusion, clearly making a frame for the entire chapter 13:1-14:1; and the word is consistent with its theme: Ephraim and Samaria's guilt leads to Yahweh's punishment, the unavoidable consequence of their deeds.

4) מוֹת 'to die' appears three times in 13:1-14:1 (vv1, 14 (x2)), whilst elsewhere the word occurs only in Hos 2:5[3]; 9:16. The term מוֹת provides Hos 13:1-14:1 with a new beginning and theme: as a consequence of his worship of Baal (v1), the death sentence on Ephraim from Yahweh is inevitable (v14).

5) בָּקַע 'to tear' occurs only twice in Hosea, in Hos 13:8b ('wild beasts shall *tear* them') and 14:1[13:16]b ('their pregnant women shall be *torn* open'). The twofold use of the term בָּקַע in 13:8b; 14:1b, and in the same sense of Yahweh's violent forcible punishment of Ephraim's sin, serves to complete the literary sub-section Hos 13:1-14:1.

6) The following twofold categorisation of the words in 13:1-14:1[13:16] serves to identify the sub-section:

A) Words which occur only in Hos 13:1-14:1, and not elsewhere in Hosea seem to serve to identify the sub-section 13:1-14:1:

אֹצֵר	'treasure' (v15).
אֲנֹכָה	'now, then' (v10).

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<sup>2</sup> The term appears also in 4:15; 5:15; 10:2.



ארבה	'window' (v3).
בקע	'to tear' (vv8; 14:1).
גאל	'to redeem' (v14).
רב	'bear' (v8).
זולה	'except' (v4).
חבל	'pang' (v13).
חרב	'to run dry' (v15).
איה	'where' (vv10, 14 (x2)). <sup>3</sup>
לבי	'lion' (v8).
מעין	'spring' (v15).
מץ	'chaff' (v3).
מקור	'fountain' (v15).
מרה	'to rebel' (v14:1).
משבר	'breach' (v13).
נמר	'leopard' (v7).
נשק	'to kiss' (v2).
סגר	'enclosure, closing' (v8).
סער	'to blow' (v3).
סתר	'to hide' (v14).
עזר	'help' (v9).
עשן	'smoke' (v3).
פגש	'to fall upon' (v8).
פרא	'to flourish' (v15).
צפן	'to store away' (v12).
קרע	'to tear up' (v8).
רתת	'to tremble' (v1).
שאול	'Sheol' (vv14 (x2)).
שסה	'to plunder' (v15).
תבונה	'skill' (v2).
תלאובה	'drought' (v5).

B) Words which occur in Hos 13:1-14:1[13:16], recur in part in Hos 1-11; 14:10[9], but do not appear in Hos 12 and 14:2-9[1-8] may serve to identify the sub-section 13:1-14:1:

		<u>Hos 13:1-14:1</u>	<u>Hos 1-3</u>	<u>Hos 4-11; 14:10</u>
אשם	'to become guilty'	vv1; 14:1		4:15; 5:15; 10:2
בעל	'Baal'	v1	2:10,15,18,19	11:2
גרן	'threshing floor'	v3		9:1, 2

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<sup>3</sup> Cf. אהי in the MT.

חמר	'to be precious'	v15		9:6, 16
חרב	'sword'	v14:1	2:20	7:16; 11:6
חרש	'craftman'	v2		8:6
יבש	'to dry up'	v15	2:7	9:16
ידע	'to know' <sup>4</sup>	v4	2:10, 22	4:1,6(x2);5:3,4, 5:9;6:3(x2),6; 7:9(x2);8:2,4; 9:7;11:3;14:10
כסף	'silver'	v2	2:10; 3:2	8:4; 9:6
לכן	'therefore'	v3	2:8, 11, 16	
מרבר	'wilderness'	vv5, 15	2:5, 16	9:10
מות	'to die'	vv1, 14 (x2)	2:5	9:16
נחם	'compassion'	v14		11:8
נפל	'to fall'	v14:1		7:7, 16; 10:8
עברה	'wrath'	v11		5:10
עגל	'calf'	v2		8:5,6;10:5;cf.11
עיר	'city'	v10		8:14 (x2); 11:6
על-כן	'therefore'	v6		4:3, 13; 6:5
ענן	'mist'	v3		6:4
פרה	'to ransom'	v14		7:13
צרר	'to bound up'	v12		4:19
רטש	'to dash'	v14:1		10:14
שבע	'to be filled'	v6 (x2)		4:10
שחת	'to destroy'	v9		9:9; 11:9
שכח	'to forget'	v6	2:15	4:6 (x2); 8:14
שבל	'to bereave'	v8		9:12
שכם	'to get up early'	v3		6:4
שמרון	'Samaria'	v14:1		7:1;8:5,6;10:5,7

### III.7.3 The Unit Hosea 14:2-9

We now turn to the literary sub-section Hos 14:2-9[1-8], which can be identified for the following reasons:

- 1) The roots שׁוּב 'turn' (14:2, 3, 5 (x2), 8) and אָהַב 'love' (14:5) serve as key

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<sup>4</sup> The term serves for a key word in 13:1-14:1, which will be discussed later.



words in 14:2-9,<sup>5</sup> presenting new motifs of exhortation and the restoration of Israel in 14:2-9; these two terms do not occur in the previous sub-section 13:1-14:1. They hence help to demarcate 14:2-9 from 13:1-14:1, making a sub-section of the former.

2) The new sub-section starting at Hos 14:2[1] is completed in 14:9[8], since אפרים in 14:9 forms an inclusion with ישראל in 14:2: in his prophetic exhortation in 14:2-4, Hosea urges 'Israel' to return to Yahweh, and in response to her return to Yahweh in 14:5-9, Yahweh promises that he will put an end to the idols which 'Ephraim' should not be involved with any more, leading to fruitful future life for 'Ephraim', (v9). Here, 'Israel' in v2 forms an inclusion with 'Ephraim' in v9, since 'Israel' and 'Ephraim' are frequently synonymous in Hosea: 'Ephraim' functions as a synonym for 'Israel', and does not refer to the rump state that remained after the attack of Tiglath-pileser III in 733 B.C. A good example may be found in 5:3:

I, I know *Ephraim*,  
and *Israel* is not hidden from me;  
for now, *Ephraim*, you have played the harlot,  
*Israel* is defiled.

In v3, in which *Ephraim* is used in parallel to *Israel* in two parallel synonymous bicola, Yahweh insists that he is aware of the situation about *Ephraim*, so, nothing in *Israel* is to be hidden: *Ephraim*, the wife of Yahweh, has become a harlot through her adulterous worship, leading to

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<sup>5</sup> Cf. the discussion on the structural analyses below.

*Israel's* defilement.<sup>6</sup> In this case, the reference to 'Israel' in 14:2 and 'Ephraim' in 14:9, together frame the sub-section Hos 14:2-9, forming an inclusion.

3) Hos 14:10[9] appears to be composed in an entirely different style from that of 14:2-9: no longer prophetic oracles but mainly wisdom language.

Verse 10 consists of a bicolon (v10a) and a tricolon (v10b):

Whoever is wise, let him understand these things,  
whoever is intelligent, let him know them.  
For the ways of Yahweh are right,  
the righteous walk in them,  
but sinners stumble in them.

Verse 10a is in the form of synonymous parallelism, while v10b consists of an initial colon followed by antithetic parallelism. The form of questions in v10a is reminiscent of Ps 107:43; Eccl 8:1; Jer 9:11[12], while the antithetic structure in 'the righteous' and 'sinners' in v10b recalls many parallels in Proverbs (e.g. 10:24, 29, 30; 11:3; 12:3, 5, 7; 24:16, etc) and also Ps 1.

The different styles in v10 lead to difficulty in deciding its origins, since they involve one in a problem of dating the relationships between the traditions of the Pentateuch,<sup>7</sup> of the Wisdom Books, and of the Prophetic Literature.

However, we may regard v10 as authentic, on the following grounds:

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<sup>6</sup> Cf. for the use of 'Ephraim' and 'Israel' in synonymous parallelism in Hosea, see Wolff (1974:91, 164); Mays (1969:83); Stuart (1987:85).

<sup>7</sup> Cf. *דרכי יהוה* 'the ways of Yahweh' in 14:10b is a favourite term of Deuteronomist (Dt 8:6; 10:12; 11:22, 28; 19:9; 26:17; 28:9; 30:16; 31:29; Jud 2:22)



A) Both אלה 'these things' and ישר 'to be right' occur in Hosea only in 14:10, while the rest of its words appear repeatedly in Hosea.

B) Both הלך 'to walk' and כשל 'to stumble' occur in the immediately previous sub-section 14:2-9: הלך in v7 and כשל in v2 respectively.

C) Both כשל (4:5 (x2); 5:5 (x2); 14:2, 10) and פשע 'to sin' (7:13; 8:1; 14:10) are typically Hosean words.<sup>8</sup>

D) In particular, ידע 'to know', a key word in Hosea for describing the relationship of Yahweh to Israel, occurs in v10, following the other key words שוב 'to return' (vv2, 3, 5 (x2), 8), and אהב 'to love' (v5).<sup>9</sup> In this connection, it is worth noting that Fisch (1988:148) is convinced that Hos 14:10 has originated with Hosea:

It is no wonder that, after exercising his "wit" in so paradoxical and riddling a discourse, the poet/prophet should sum up the work in a metapoetic fashion reminiscent of Ps 92:5-6 and say, 'Whoever is wise, let him understand these things: / whoever is prudent, let him know them' (14:9).

Therefore, although we should separate 14:10 from 14:2-9, primarily as a consequence of their different styles, and also because the unity of Hos 14:2-9 is suggested by the inclusion provided by 'Israel' in v2 and 'Ephraim'

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<sup>8</sup> So Wolff (1974:239); A/F (647).

<sup>9</sup> A detailed discussion will follow in ch 4 of the present study.

in v9, the final verse may still come from Hosea himself.<sup>10</sup>

4) The following two groups of words contribute to shaping the sub-section Hos 14:2-9[1-8]:

A) Words which occur in Hos 14:2-9 alone seem to serve to identify the sub-section:

ברוש	'fir tree' (v9).
הור	'beauty' (v7).
זית	'olive tree' (v7).
ינק	'shoot' (v7).
יתום	'orphan' (v4).
לבנון	'Lebanon' (vv6, 7, 8).
נרבה	'free inclination, freely' (v5).
רענן	'luxuriant' (v9).
שפה	'lip' (v3).
שושן	'lily' (v6).
שור	'to strengthen' (v9).

B) Words which appear in Hos 14:2-9, occur in part in Hos 1-12, but do not recur in Hos 13:1-14:1[13:16], 10[9] may serve to demarcate the sub-section from its immediate neighbours:

		<u>14:2-9</u>	<u>1-3</u>	<u>4-12</u>
אהב	'to love' <sup>11</sup>	v5	2:7, 9, 12, 14, 15; 3:1 (x4)	4:18; 8:9; 9:1, 10, 15; 10:11; 11:1, 4; 12:8.
גפן	'vine'	v8	2:14	10:1.
דגן	'grain'	v8	2:10, 11, 24	7:14; 9:1.

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<sup>10</sup> For a discussion of Hos 14:10 as a Hosean oracle, see, for example, Seow (1982:212-224), whilst as a non-Hosean saying, see, for instance, Sheppard (1980:129-137); A/F (647-648) and Stuart (1987:219) are undecided.

<sup>11</sup> Cf. the term serves as a key word in 14:2-9.



יין	'wine'	v8		4:11; 7:5; 9:4.
ממני	'from me'	v9		5:3; 7:13; 8:4.
נכה	'to strike'	v6		6:1; 9:16.
סוס	'horse'	v4	1:7.	
פרי	'fruit'	vv3, 9		9:16; 10:1 (x2), 13.
פרח	'to flourish'	vv6, 8		10:4.
צל	'shadow'	v8		4:13.
רחם	'compassion'	v4	1:6, 7; 2:3, 6, 21 2:25 (x2)	9:14.
שוב	'to return' <sup>12</sup>	vv2, 3, 5 (x2), 8	2:9, 11; 3:5	4:9; 5:4; 6:1, 11; 7:10, 16; 8:13; 9:3; 11:5 (x2), 7, 9; 12:3, 7, 15.
שרש	'root'	v6		9:16.

In the light of the above analyses of the repetitions of words, phrases, lines, inclusion, and parallelism in Hos 12-14, the second section of the second part of the book of Hosea (12-14) can be divided into three literary sub-sections: 12:1-15; 13:1-14:1; 14:2-9. We now turn to these three literary sub-sections, called hereafter A, B, and C in order to examine how they are connected with each other in shaping Hosea 12-14 as a literary unity.

### III.8 The Literary Unity of Hosea 12-14

Analyses of Hos 12-14 as a literary unity require a two stage examination of the repetition of words, phrases and lines in the three sub-sections: on the one hand, the relationship of A to B, and that of B to C, and on the other, the relationship of A, B, and C for assessment of the section Hos 12-14 as a literary unity. As far as the criteria for demonstration of a unity of literary units are concerned, (as in the case of the connection of individual literary units), the simple fact of recurring words, phrases, and lines could

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<sup>12</sup> Cf. the term also serves as a key word in 14:2-9.

not alone suffice. Rather the repetition should convey a consistent theme displaying either deliberate similarities or contrasts – so signifying a unity. We may in fact regard repetition as a significant rhetorical device unifying Hos 12–14. Inclusion and distant parallelism will also be found particularly important, as two forms known as major rhetorical devices, both for delimiting and unifying literary structures.<sup>13</sup>

### III.8.1 The Relationship of Hosea 12:1–15 (A) to 13:1–14:1 (B)

\*1 קרִים 'the east wind' in 12:2a recurs only in Hosea, in 13:15a.

Ephraim feeds the wind  
he pursues the east wind (קרִים) all day long. (12:2a)

Though he may flourish among brothers,  
the east wind (קרִים), the wind of Yahweh will come  
rising from the wilderness. (13:15a)

12:2a describes Ephraim as doing something foolish, futile, and impossible; Ephraim befriends the wind,<sup>14</sup> and pursues the east wind rising from the eastern deserts. So the senseless deeds of Ephraim resulted in her destruction, since Yahweh called the east wind as the instrument of his judgment to bring drought to Ephraim (13:15a). קרִים in both 12:2a and 13:15a serves 1) to stress the foolishness of Ephraim's pursuing the east wind, a metaphor for Assyria, on whom Ephraim relied, by whom, however, she was destroyed; and 2) to connect (A) to (B).

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<sup>13</sup> Cf. Polan (1986:18–19).

<sup>14</sup> An image similar to רוח in 12:2a can be seen in 8:7a: 'For they sow the wind; they shall reap the whirlwind'.

\*2 The traditional affirmation of the self-introduction formula: **וְאֲנִי יְהוָה** 'I am Yahweh your God from the land of Egypt' in 12:10[9]a is repeated only in Hosea, in 13:4a. Verses 12:8-9 state that like a Canaanite trader, Ephraim had secured his economic prosperity by using false scales. Yahweh, the God of Exodus, is, therefore, to make Ephraim return to the tents in the wilderness (12:10). On the other hand, after the announcement of judgment on Ephraim, in the main as a consequence of her idolatry (13:1-3), Yahweh, her God from the land of Egypt demands<sup>1</sup> recognition that he alone is her saviour. The contexts of 12:10 and 13:4 differ: Ephraim's boastfulness of her economic prosperity will have the effect of returning her to her nomadic life in the wilderness (12:10), whilst the judgment stemming from her idolatry to Baal brings the demand that Israel know only Yahweh. Yet the self-formula is used for the same purpose in both these passages: to proclaim Yahweh's will that Israel should be saved, since 'I am Yahweh *your* God from the land of Egypt'.

The occurrences of the formula only in Hosea, in 12:10 and 13:14, and their consistent theme of Yahweh, the sole God of Israel, therefore, serve to connect A to B.

\*3 **אָח** 'brother' occurs only once each in A and B, in 12:4; 13:15:

In the womb he took his brother (**אָח**)  
in his manhood he contended with God. (12:4)

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<sup>1</sup> Wolff (1974:226) notes this verse praises Yahweh who is Israel's sole saviour, and excludes a demand upon Israel. However, in light of the verse context, we render **עָתָּה**: '(Ephraim) *should* (not) know (any God but me)' (13:4b).



Though he may flourish among brothers (אֶחָיו),  
the east wind, the wind of Yahweh, will come  
rising from the wilderness. (13:15a)

Hos 12:4 portrays Jacob's untrustworthy character which had its origins before his birth. Even in his womb, he deceived his brother. Such is the meaning conveyed by Hosea's assonance: עֶקֶב/עֶקֶב 'Jacob'/'deceit'. Through a review of the career of Jacob,<sup>2</sup> one of Israel's ancestors, Hosea examines contemporary Israel's deceit: she has gained prosperity, using false scales (cf. 12:8, 9). In a similar manner, 13:15a describes the superiority of Ephraim among brothers, something also noted in 13:1:

When Ephraim spoke, there was trembling;  
he was exalted in Israel.  
But he became guilty through Baal and died.

Therefore, אֶחָיו in 12:4 balances its use in 13:15 and (given the context, 13:1). In this case, the emendation of אֶחָיו 'brothers' (13:15) to אֶרֶב 'reeds'<sup>3</sup> is unnecessary. The appearance of אֶחָיו in 12:4 and 13:15, both times in connection with deceit and the consequent prosperity of Jacob/Israel among brothers, therefore, links A to B.

\*4 The root זָבַח 'to sacrifice' occurs repeatedly in Hos 1-11, especially in Hos 4-11 (3:4; 4:13, 19, 14; 6:6; 8:11 (x2), 13 (x2); 9:4; 10:1, 2, 8; 11:2); but within Hos 12-14, it recurs only in 12:12[11] (x2) and 13:2:

In Gilgal they sacrificed (זָבַחוּ) bulls.  
So their altars (מִזְבְּחוֹתָם) were like stone heaps  
on the furrows of the field. (12:12aβ-b)

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<sup>2</sup> A detailed discussion on this issue will follow later.

<sup>3</sup> For example, Wolff, Mays, Stuart; cf. A/F (627) note 'he' in 13:15a could be Jacob.

'To them', they say, 'make sacrifice (זבח)'.  
Humans kiss calves. (13:2c)

זבח in 12:12 is used to highlight Ephraim's guilt in following the cult, with its resultant punishment. Similarly, 13:12 indicts her persistent cultic iniquity: she had been continually involved in pagan worship using molten calf images, which received a human kiss as in the cult of Baal (1 Kgs 19:18). The use of זבח in 12:12; 13:2 and its consistent theme of Israel's cultic guilt denoted by זבח hence serve to match A and B. At the same time זבח connects Hos 1-3 and 4-11, since, as in the references to זבח noted above, the cultic iniquity is unceasingly condemned by Hosea in particular in Hos 4-11. Here the only exception seems to be in 6:6: כִּי חָסַד חֲפָצְתִּי וְלֹא זֶבַח וְדָעַת אֱלֹהִים מַעֲלֹוֹת, which can be rendered: 'for I desire steadfast love rather than sacrifice, the knowledge of God rather than burnt offerings': we can regard לֹא (v6a) as parallel to מֵן (v6b) (Cf. A/F (430)); and moreover, we should not suppose that Israel's religious life was without sacrifice. In this sense, Hosea did not negate the institution of sacrifice itself, but condemned contemporary Israel's perverse cultic life,<sup>4</sup> for example, 13:2 is reminiscent of 11:2b: 'They kept sacrificing to the Baals, and burning incense to idols'. Israel should hence dwell many days without sacrifice (יָאֵז זֶבַח) in preparation for her renewed cultic life (3:4).

\*5 חָטָא 'to sin' occurs repeatedly in Hos 4-11 (4:7, 8; 6:9; 8:11 (x2), 13; 10:8,

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<sup>4</sup> Cf. similarly, Emerson (1984:143); Brueggemann (1968:98). On the other hand, Mays (1969:98) holds the opinion of Hos 6:6, that it is 'the declaration rejecting sacrifice'; cf. Am 5:21-27; Is 1:10-17; Mi 6:6-8; Jer 7; Pss 40:6-8; 51:16-17.

9), but once in 12:9; 13:2, 12 respectively, and after that the term does not appear any more:

All my toils will not find for myself any guilt  
that is sin (חטא). (12:9b)

Now they continue to sin (לחטא);  
they have made a molten image for themselves. (13:2a)

Ephraim's iniquity is bound up,  
his sin (חטאתו) is stored away. (13:12a)

In 12:9, the term חטא refers to Ephraim's unjust wealth. The word in 13:2b is, with עון 'iniquity' in 13:12a, connected to the immediately preceding sin – Ephraim's idolatry (vv1-2), her ingratitude to Yahweh (v6), and her trust in human kings (v10): in Hosea, חטא is used as a general term for 'sin' with עון, since חטא occurs paired with עון in 4:8; 8:13; 9:9; 12:9; 13:12.<sup>5</sup> In this overall context, the threefold use of חטא in 12:9; 13:2, 12, and its consistent theme of Ephraim's sin, both in general and in particular, serves to unite not only A to B but also Hos 12-14 to Hos 4-11.

In the light of the above analyses, A and B are joined together by the repetition of the clause ואנכי יהוה אלהיך מארץ מצרים 'I am Yahweh your God from the land of Egypt', of the words קרים 'east wind', אח 'brother', זבח 'to sacrifice', חטא 'to sin', and by the consistency of the themes throughout the literary sub-sections of A and B.

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<sup>5</sup> Cf. the excursus on עון 'guilt' and חטאת 'sin' in Hosea by Wolff (1974:145); BDB (306-310) for חטא; (730-731) for עון.



### III.8.2 The Relationship of Hosea 13:1-14:1 (B) to 14:2-9 (C)

Our discussion now proceeds to the connection of B to C. There is no word which is unique to these two large literary sub-sections. However, there are words which appear in both sub-sections, and some of which occur in Hos 1-11, but not in Hos 12. These have served to relate B to C to some degree.

\*1 אַף 'anger' occurs in 8:5; 11:9; 13:11; 14:5 in Hosea. In 13:11a ('I may give you a king in my *anger*'), Yahweh's wrath is manifestly directed at Israel's human kingship, while in the literary context of Yahweh's promise of future life for Israel in 14:5-9, the divine anger has turned back from Israel (14:5):

I will heal their apostasy,  
I will love them freely.  
For my anger (אַף) has turned away from him.<sup>6</sup>

This includes both her reliance on human kings (13:11) and foreign powers (14:4) rather than her real king Yahweh (13:11), and also her sin of cultic idolatry (14:4; cf. 'Throw away<sup>7</sup> your calf, O Samaria. My anger (אַף) burns against them' (8:5a)). Together, human kingship and idolatry represent the two main targets of Hosea's accusations. אַף in 14:5 recalls its use in 11:9a ('I will not execute my fierce anger (אַף), I will not again destroy Ephraim'), since the overall context of 11:9a is similar to that of 14:5: most of the words in 14:5 appear elsewhere in Hos 11: אָפּ 'to heal' (11:3);

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<sup>6</sup> The change of pronoun is used frequently throughout Hosea. Therefore, 'him' in 14:5b refers to 'them' in 14:5a, and the pronoun is employed to connect v5 to vv6-9, in which Israel is referred to in the singular form 'he'.

<sup>7</sup> Reading אָפּ for אָפּ in the MT; cf. LXX (ἀποτρίψαι).

משובה 'apostasy' (11:7); אהב 'to love' (11:1, 4); כי 'for' (11:1, 3, 5, 9, 10); שוב 'to turn' (11:5 (x2), 9); אף 'anger' (11:9). In this sense, אף in 11:9 can be regarded as preparatory to its use in 14:5, where its removal emphasises Yahweh's free love for Israel. So, the twofold use of אף in 13:11; 14:5 and the consistency in theme of Yahweh's anger over the sin of Israel's dependence on human rulers and of her cultic life connect B to C.

\*2 טל 'dew' occurs only three times in Hosea – both negatively (6:4; 13:3), and positively (14:6[5]):

In 6:4b, Yahweh laments over the transitory love that Ephraim and Judah have for him, love compared to the cloud and dew: ונטל משנים הלך '(Your love is like a morning cloud), like the dew that goes away early'. The clause recurs in 13:3, in which, dew with other three metaphors (mist, chaff, and smoke) is employed to further justify Yahweh's punishment of Ephraim, who will disappear immediately.

On the other hand, in 14:6, for the repentant Israel, Yahweh promises that he will be like dew to her so that she may be prosperous, for dew (or 'light rain' (Gen 27:28)) is necessary for the life of plants.

The comparison of the threefold use of טל 'dew' in 6:4; 13:3; 14:6 exhibits two interesting contrasts: 1) The devotion of Ephraim and Judah to Yahweh is like the dew that disappears without delay (6:4), whilst the love of Yahweh for Israel is like the dew that brings her abundant life (14:6); 2) The immediate future of Israel is that by Yahweh's punishment she will disappear like the dew that goes away early (13:3), whilst Yahweh will be

like life giving dew for the penitential Israel (14:6). Thus, the threefold occurrences of **ל** in 6:4; 13:3; 14:6 emphasise its contrastive meaning, connecting both B to C, and Hos 4-11 to 12-14.

\*3 **שׁע** 'to save' occurs in Hosea, in 13:4, 10; 14:4[3]; 1:7 (x2):

I am Yahweh your God from the land of Egypt.  
You should not know any God except me;  
for there is no saviour (**מוֹשִׁיעַ**) except me. (13:4)

Where now is your king  
that he may save you (**וַיִּשְׁעֶךָ**) in all your cities? (13:10a)

Assyria will not save us (**יִשְׁעֵנוּ**);  
we will not ride on horses. (14:4a)

In 13:4, Yahweh demands that Israel acknowledge only Yahweh, since he is her unique saviour. In 13:10, through a reproachful rhetorical question, Hosea shows contempt for the powerlessness of Israel's human kingship, especially in the midst of the national crisis which ensued from her turning away from Yahweh, her sole saviour. So, in the form of the penitent prayer in 14:4a, Israel should confess that even the super-power Assyria can not save her. This verse is reminiscent of 1:7a $\beta$ -b, in which **שׁע** is employed twice in the significant contrast:

and I will save them (**וְהוֹשַׁעְתִּים**) by Yahweh their God; but I will not save them (**אֶוֹשִׁיעֵם**) by bow or sword or war, by horses or horsemen.

The fivefold use of **שׁע** in 13:4, 10; 14:4; 1:7 (x2) and its consistent theme that Yahweh is the only saviour for Israel hence serves to connect both B to C, and Hos 1-3 to 12-14.



\*4 עֶצֶב 'idol' appears four times in Hosea (13:2b, 14:9[8]; 4:17; 8:4b):

Ephraim is joined to idols (עֲצָבִים),  
let him alone.<sup>8</sup> (4:17)

With their silver and gold  
they made idols (עֲצָבִים) for themselves.  
so that it may be cut off. (8:4b)

They have made a molten image for themselves,  
idols (עֲצָבִים) from their silver according to their skill. (13:2b)

Ephraim, what has he to do with idols (לְעֲצָבִים) any more? (14:9a)

The use of the term עֲצָבִים in 13:2 (and 4:17; 8:4) demonstrates the fact that Israel had been deeply involved in idolatry. Yahweh thus denounces idols as his final act towards establishing a prosperous future for Israel in 14:9. The twin uses of עֶצֶב in 13:2; 14:9 (along with 4:17; 8:4), and the theme of Ephraim's idolatry, therefore, serve to relate B to C, and also Hos 4-11 to 12-14.

\*5 The term מַעֲשֵׂה 'work' is used in Hos 12-14, in two verses (13:2; 14:4[3]b):

They have made a molten image for themselves,  
idols from their silver according to their skill;  
all of it is the work of (מַעֲשֵׂה) craftsmen. (13:2b)

We will not say any more, 'Our God',  
to the work of (לְמַעֲשֵׂה) our hands. (14:4b)

The fact that עֶצֶב 'idol' and מַעֲשֵׂה 'work' occur together in the final two chapters (13:2; 14:4, 9) indicates that Yahweh is thoroughly disgusted by Israel's idolatry. She should therefore turn completely away from idols, and return to Yahweh in order to enter into his act of salvation. So, the two

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<sup>8</sup> So RSV.

appearances of מעשה 'work' and its connotation of Israel's image-making craft, as in 13:2; 14:4 link B to C.

In the light of the repetition of the words (אף 'anger', טל 'dew', ישע 'to save', עצב 'idol', מעשה 'work'), and the consistency of their use in B and C together, the above terms can be claimed to connect B to C.

### III.8.3 The Relationship of Hosea 12:1-15 (A); 13:1-14:1 (B); 14:2-9 (C)

We now turn to discussion of the relationship of these three sub-sections (A; B; C). In each of these sub-sections, there is no word which is specific to Hosea. The following terms and phrase, however, are found throughout in the three literary sub-sections:

\*1 אמר 'to say' occurs five times in the literary context of Hos 12-14 (12:9; 13:2, 10; 14:3, 4). Three of these verses (12:9; 13:2, 10) quote Ephraim's own words in evidence against her: Hos 12:9 describes Ephraim's stupid assertion that her wealth secured by falsehood and oppression can not be regarded as a sin worth mentioning. However, the wealth should be seen as sinful, since wealth of such a kind contravenes the social norms of the covenant. Ephraim's own statement in 13:2b is evidence of her idol worship. In 13:10b, by way of a rhetorical question, Hosea ridicules Israel's dependence on human rulers who cannot save their country in the midst of the national crisis.

In contrast, in her sayings in the repentant prayer (14:3b, 4b), Israel is to confess all of her guilt including the sin of resorting to alien powers and of idolatry. The five occurrences of אמר: three times as Ephraim's own speech

(12:9; 13:2, 10), once in Hosea's exhortation to penitence (14:3b), and once in the penitential statement itself (14:4b) connect the three large literary sub-sections (A; B; C).

\*2 The emphatic personal pronoun 'אני/אני 'I' is found three times in Hos 12-14 (12:11[10]; 13:5; 14:9[8]):

I spoke to the prophets.  
It was I ('אני) who multiplied many visions.  
Through the prophets I gave parables. (12:11)

It was I ('אני) who fed you in the wilderness,  
in the land of drought. (13:5)

Ephraim, what has he to do with idols any more?  
It is I ('אני) who have answered,  
and will watch for him. (14:9a)

The emphatic pronouns ('אני (12:11); אני (13:5; 14:9)) both lay stress on the salvific act of the speaker, Yahweh: he himself had revealed his will to Ephraim through his prophets from the very beginning of her history (12:11), and fed her in the wilderness (13:5). In 14:9, in response to her repentant prayer, Yahweh declares the final termination of their idolatry, and emphasises through the remaining pronoun אני in v9a that he himself have answered, and will watch for her for her future thriving life, since Yahweh is like a luxuriant fir tree. Here Yahweh promises Israel that he will be the source of her future life of abundance, as he was at the very beginning of her history.

The theme of these three verses attested by the emphatic pronoun (12:11; 13:5; 14:9) is thus consistent: Yahweh, who has been Israel's unfailing God from the Exodus and wilderness years onwards, will, in the time of renewal,



be her steadfast God, her sole saviour and benefactor of prosperous life.

Therefore, the threefold use of the emphatic pronoun (אני/אני) in 12:11; 13:5; 14:9 and the consistency in its theme that Yahweh himself has been and will be the only saviour for Israel in the three large literary sub-sections, in 12:11; 13:5; 14:9 serve to combine the three sub-sections (A; B; C).

\*3 The divine name יהוה occurs in every chapter in Hosea,<sup>9</sup> while אלהים appears twenty-six times:

1) with the suffix (x19):

- a) אלהיך 'your God' (4:6; 9:1; 12:7 (x2), 10[6, 9]; 13:4; 14:2[1])
- b) אלהיהם 'their God' (1:7; 3:5; 4:12; 5:4; 7:10)
- c) אלהי 'my God' (2:25[23]; 8:2; 9:8, 17)
- d) אלהיו 'his God' (9:8)
- e) אלהיה 'her God' (14:1[13:16])
- f) אלהינו 'our God' (14:4[3])

2) without the suffix (x7):

- a) אלהים 'God' (3:1; 4:1; 6:6; 8:6; 12:4, 6[3, 5]; 13:4)

On the other hand, אל occurs three times (2:1[1:10]; 11:9; 12:1[11:12]), while Hosea calls Yahweh ארניו 'his LORD' only once (12:15[14]).

In Hos 12-14, יהוה occurs nine times (12:3, 6 (x2), 10, 14; 13:4, 15; 14:2, 3), and אלהים also appears nine times in the section (12:4, 6, 7, 10[3, 5, 6, 9];

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<sup>9</sup> יהוה occurs 45 times in Hosea (1:1, 2 (x3), 4, 7; 2:15, 18, 22, 23[13, 16, 20, 21]; 3:1 (x2), 5 (x2); 4:1 (x2), 10, 15, 16; 5:4, 6, 7; 6:1, 3; 8:1, 13; 9:3, 4 (x2), 5, 14; 10:3, 12; 11:10, 11; 12:3, 6 (x2), 10, 14[2, 5, 9, 13]; 13:4, 15; 14:2, 3, 10[1, 2, 9]).

13:4 (x2); 14:1[13:16], 14:2, 4[1, 3]). The most striking characteristic of the use of the divine name in Hos 12-14 is that it is evident that Yahweh, the only God for Israel, has been closely related to her. This is manifest by the suffixes attached to אלהים: אלהיך 'your God' (12:7 (x2), 10[6, 9]; 13:4; 14:2[1]); אלהיה 'her God' i.e. Samaria's God (14:1[13:16]); אלהינו 'our God' (14:4[3]).

Hosea proclaims that from the time of Moses ('By a prophet Yahweh brought Israel up from Egypt' (12:14)), Yahweh has been the sole God of Israel through his acts of salvation ('I am your God from the land of Egypt' (12:10; 13:4)). Therefore, Israel should not know any God but Yahweh (13:4b).

In particular, the fact that the phrase יהוה אלהיך 'Yahweh your God' appears only in Hosea, in 12:10[9]; 13:4; 14:2[1] is a strong evidence for connecting the three large sub-sections (A; B; C):

But I am Yahweh your God (יהוה אלהיך) from the land of Egypt.  
Once more I will make you dwell in tents  
as in the days of meeting. (12:10)

I am Yahweh your God (יהוה אלהיך) from the land of Egypt.  
You should not know any God except me;  
for there is no saviour except me. (13:4)

Return, O Israel, to Yahweh your God (יהוה אלהיך),  
for you have stumbled on your guilt. (14:2)

The use of the phrase יהוה אלהיך 'Yahweh your God' in 12:10 serves, in the context of the unjust 'Canaanite' wealth of Ephraim (vv8-9), to stress that Yahweh, the God of the Exodus, is her sole saviour and benefactor; he will make her dwell again in tents as in her wilderness life in order to recover her relationship with him and know that the source of her wealth is not

Baal, but Yahweh her God. The repetition of the phrase in 13:4a, in the opening line, as in 12:10a, reaffirms that Yahweh, the God of Exodus, is the unique saviour of Israel. Israel should hence acknowledge Yahweh exclusively. However, once satisfied, she forgot him (13:6). So, in 14:2, in his prophetic exhortation, Hosea proclaims that the only way to salvation is for Israel to return to Yahweh, her only saviour.

In short, in Hos 12-14, the nine occurrences of יהוה 'and of אלהים respectively, and the repetition of the phrase יהוה אלהיך 'Yahweh your God' in 12:10; 13:4; 14:2 alone, consistently lay stress on the central idea that Israel should acknowledge Yahweh, her sole saviour. The latter is especially significant, as it connect the three literary sub-sections (A; B; C).

\*4 עון 'guilt' is found four times in Hos 12-14 (12:9[8]; 13:12; 14:2, 3[1, 2]):

All my toils will not find for myself any guilt (עון)  
that is sin. (12:9)

Ephraim's guilt (עון) is bound up,  
his sin is stored away. (13:12)

Return, O Israel, to Yahweh your God,  
for you have stumbled on your guilt (בעונך). (14:2)

Take away with you, return to Yahweh;  
say to him,  
'Take away all guilt (עון). Take what is good,  
that we may render the fruit of our lips'. (14:3)

The use of עון in 12:9 reflects Ephraim's guilt in obtaining wealth by falsehood and oppression, although Ephraim does not admit it as guilt worth mentioning. However, her guilt, including that of unjust wealth, is bound up for Yahweh's inevitable punishment (13:12). So, in 14:2, in his prophetic



exhortation, Hosea urges Israel to return to Yahweh, repenting of the evil deeds which have caused her to stumble (14:2). The repentant Israel should first of all confess her guilt in a penitential prayer (14:3).

Thus, the fourfold use of וָעַל in 12:9; 13:12; 14:2, 3, and the associated consistent theme that the evident guilt of Israel is to be repented of to achieve her salvation, serves to connect A, B, and C.

\*5 אֶפְרַיִם 'Ephraim' is found seven times in Hos 12-14 (12:1[11:12], 2, 9, 15[1, 8, 14]; 13:1, 12; 14:9[8]).

In 14:9a אֶפְרַיִם (*Ephraim*, what has he to do with idols any more?) forms an inclusion with אֶפְרַיִם in 12:1a (*Ephraim* has surrounded me with deceit'). As noted above, inclusion serves as a major rhetorical device demonstrating the extent of a unit by combining the beginning and end of a unit in a clear way. In this sense, the inclusion made by 12:1 ('Ephraim') and 14:9 ('Ephraim') is significant for the literary unity of Hos 12-14. In 12:1, in the context of judgment, Yahweh has been surrounded by Ephraim's deceit, whilst in 14:9, in the context of salvation, Yahweh, as the saviour of 'Ephraim', promises her future fruitful (פֶּרִי) life, having ended the guilt-making idolatry which had invited his punishment.

Moreover, the repetition of 'Ephraim' in the literary context of Hos 12-14 is consistent in meaning: in 12:1, Yahweh laments over Ephraim's deceitful life. In addition, in 12:2a, they are deceived by their useless efforts to look for something illusive ('Ephraim' feeds the wind). In 12:9, Ephraim's wealth is condemned as a result of its having been collected from falsehood and

oppression, activities such as result in Yahweh's bitter provocation (12:15). In 13:1, Hosea returns to one of Ephraim's major iniquities: idolatry, which is to be kept for Yahweh's judgment (13:12). However, in the time of restoration, Yahweh promises that Ephraim will be completely free from idols (14:9). The verses featuring אַפְרַיִם are all connected with Ephraim's being guilty of deceit and worship of idols.

The rhetorical device of the inclusion and the consistent theme in the sevenfold use of 'Ephraim' in the three large literary sub-sections (12:1, 2, 9, 15; 13:1, 12; 14:9) hence serve to connect A, B, and C.

\*6 יִשְׂרָאֵל 'Israel' occurs eight times in Hos 12-14 (12:1[11:12], 3, 13, 14[2, 12, 13]; 13:1, 9; 14:2, 6[1, 5]):

Ephraim has surrounded me with deceit,  
and the House of Israel (יִשְׂרָאֵל) with falsehood. (12:1a)

Yahweh has a dispute with Israel (יִשְׂרָאֵל). (12:3a)

Jacob fled to the land of Aram.  
Israel (יִשְׂרָאֵל) served for a wife,  
for a wife he was a keeper. (12:13)

By a prophet Yahweh brought Israel (יִשְׂרָאֵל) up from Egypt.  
By a prophet he was kept. (12:14)

When Ephraim spoke, there was a trembling;  
he was exalted in Israel (בִּישְׂרָאֵל). (13:1a)

Your destruction, O Israel (יִשְׂרָאֵל) !;  
who indeed will be your help? (13:9)

Return, O Israel (יִשְׂרָאֵל), to Yahweh your God,  
for you have stumbled on your guilt. (14:2)

I will be like the dew for Israel (לִישְׂרָאֵל);  
he will flourish like the lily.  
He shall strike root like Lebanon. (14:6)



In 12:1a, Yahweh laments over Israel's falsehood and Ephraim's deceit. In 12:3a, Yahweh, as a plaintiff, disputes with 'Israel' due to the falsehood. In 12:13, 14, 'Israel' is used to contrast the falsehood of 'Israel', the ancestor of the contemporary Israel of Hosea's time (v13) with the truth of Yahweh, who brought 'Israel', ancestors of the present Israel of Hosea's days, from Egypt at the very beginning of her history (v14). The use of 'Israel' in 13:1a conveys the guilt of Israel, for which Ephraim is more responsible than any other region of the northern kingdom.<sup>1</sup> 13:9 describes Yahweh's threat, and his agony over the self destruction of 'Israel'. In the context of salvation, therefore, Hosea is to invite 'Israel' to return to Yahweh (14:2), who is ready to bring the repentant 'Israel' productive life ('I will be like the dew for *Israel*') (14:6a).

The eightfold use of 'Israel' (12:1, 3, 13, 14; 13:1, 9; 14:2, 6) and the consistent theme that the guilty 'Israel' should return to Yahweh for her future life hence functions to connect A, B, and C.

To sum up. First, it can be said that the repetition of the clause (וְאֵנִי) 'I am Yahweh your God from the land of Egypt'), and of the words (קָרָם 'east wind', אָח 'brother', זָבַח 'to sacrifice', חָטָא 'to sin') serves to connect A to B, and that that of the terms (אָף 'anger', טֵל 'dew',

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<sup>1</sup> Cf. on this subject, Wolff (1974:225) notes that 'for Hosea "Ephraim" - denotes the region of Mount Ephraim, where the royal residence of Samaria is located. From there, in the last two decades, issued many a political decision which brought "terror" to the other areas of the northern kingdom and also to Judah'; and similarly, Ibn Ezra (1988:123, 126).



ישע 'to save', עֶצֶב 'idol', מַעֲשֵׂה 'work') serves to relate B to C. Second, that the repetition of the words (אָמַר 'to say', אֲנִי/אֲנִי 'I', אֱלֹהִים/יְהוָה 'Yahweh'/'God', עוֹן 'guilt', אֶפְרַיִם 'Ephraim', and יִשְׂרָאֵל 'Israel'), and of the phrase (יְהוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ 'Yahweh your God') in Hosea, in 12:10; 13:4; 14:2 alone, and the consistency of their usage in these literary contexts, links the three large literary sub-sections (A; B; C). In the light of this repetition of the words, the phrase, and the clause in the three literary sub-sections, Hos 12-14 can be claimed as a literary unity.

In this connection, we can note the work of Groves (1987:179-191) on Amos 9:11-15. In this study, Groves has argued for the secondary nature of these final verses of Amos. His approach to this passage is to seek out the linguistic and conceptual allusions which connect these verses to the remainder of Amos, and to the entire prophetic corpus, especially to Deutero-Isaiah, Joel, and Jeremiah. We can fully acknowledge his endeavour to explore the relationship of this passage not only to the rest of the book, but also to the whole prophetic literature, rather than simply to discuss these verses in and for themselves, apart from the remainder of Amos. However, we can offer the following comments on his work:

1) As noted earlier, in Hosea, there is a regular shift from Israel's guilt and her consequent judgment to her salvation (Hos 1-2 > 3; 4-10 > 11; 12-13 > 14). I shall now discuss the question of the relations between the units of Israel's judgment and those of Yahweh's salvation. With regard to the relationship of Hos 14:2-9 (equivalent to Am 9:11-15) to the rest of the book of Hosea, the following three important terms which are repeated in both Hos 4-10 // 11 and 12-13 // 14 contribute to the connection of

judgment to salvation in Hosea:<sup>2</sup>

\*1 The emphatic pronouns (אני; אנכי 'I') in Hos 4-10 are used to emphasise both Yahweh's chastisement on Israel's guilt (4:6c; 5:3a, 14b (x2)), and his salvific act for her (7:13b, 15a; 10:11a), while in Hos 11:3a, the pronoun אנכי is employed to lay stress on Yahweh's saving deeds for Israel. On the other hand, in Hos 12-14, the pronouns (12:11; 13:5; 14:9) are all used to emphasise the salvific act of Yahweh for Israel (cf. III.8.3.2). In the light of the usage of אני/אנכי in Hos 4-14, the pronouns are used to stress Yahweh's punishment on Israel's guilt (4:6c; 5:3a, 14b (x2)), to contrast Yahweh's faithfulness for Israel's salvation in spite of her unfaithfulness (7:13b, 15a; 10:11a; 12:11; 13:5), and finally to lay stress on Yahweh's faithfulness for Israel more fully in the context of salvation (11:3a; 14:9) than in that of judgment.

\*2 אף 'anger' occurs four times in Hosea (8:5a; 11:9a; 13:11a; 14:5b). The term is used, in the context of judgment, to signify Yahweh's punishment of Israel's guilt related to idolatry (8:5a), and to kingship (13:11a). On the other hand, in the context of salvation, the term is employed in expressions of Yahweh refraining from anger for Israel (11:9a; 14:5b) (cf. III.8.2.1).

\*3 ישב 'to dwell' is used, in the context of judgment (Hos 4-10; 12-13), to

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<sup>2</sup> For example, the following common terms between Hos 1-2 // 3 and 12-13 // 14 include: אמר (cf. III.8.3.1); עור; between Hos 4-10 // 11 and 12-13 // 14: אשור; לקח; על; עשה; and between Hos 1-2 // 3; 4-10 // 11; and 12-13 // 14: אהב (cf. IV.7); אלהים (cf. III.8.3.3); הלך; יהוה (cf. III.8.3.3); ישראל (cf. III.8.3.6); כי; לא; שוב (cf. IV.2).



explain that the inhabitants of the land (4:1) cannot dwell in the land of Yahweh due to their unfaithfulness to him (4:3; 9:3; 12:10), while, in contrast, in the context of salvation (Hos 11; 14), the term is employed to emphasise their redwelling in the land of Yahweh by his grace for them (11:11; 14:8).

In the light of the usage of these three important terms (יָשַׁב; אָרָץ; אֲנִי/אֶנִּי) as well as the words common to both judgment and salvation in Hosea, we can argue that these two units (judgment and salvation) are not simply juxtaposed as merely contradictory units without any significance, but as complementary ones in order to present a meaningful contrast, and so form a larger constituent literary unit of the whole book of Hosea. In terms of the dramatic movement of the two unit schema (judgment and salvation) in the book of Hosea, tension rises in the context of judgment (Hos 1-2; 4-10; 12-13), and is dramatically eased and reversed in the context of salvation (Hos 3; 11; 14). Hence, if we regard the units of judgment as integral to Hosea, those of salvation are also to be viewed as integral to it, not an expansion of it.

2) With regard to the allusions which connect this passage to the entire prophetic corpus, Groves uses as illustration the phrase שָׁבוּת שְׁבוּת (Am 9:14a) in order to argue for an explicit reversal (p. 185). However, this line is very similar to Hos 6:11b-7:1a:

Am 9:14a:

And I will restore  
the fortunes of my people Israel

וּשְׁבַתִּי  
אֶת שְׁבוּת עַמִּי יִשְׂרָאֵל



Hos 6:11b-7:1a<sub>g</sub>:

When I restore the fortunes of my people,  
when I heal Israel

בשובי שבות עמי  
כרפאי לישראל

I consider that this saying of Hosea originated with him.<sup>3</sup> Emmerson  
(1984:184 n 132) has a similar view:

There is no reason why the expression שוב שבות should be considered later than Hosea's time, and v. 11b attributed to redactional influence, for the noun שבות is to be connected with the root שׁוּב, with the meaning 'restoration', and not with שָׁבָה, which would give the specific meaning 'captivity'.

3) As for Hos 14:2-9, its form and content are not entirely new in Hosea: the dialogue between Hosea (the people) and Yahweh is illustrated in 6:1-6.

On the basis of the above interpretation (1-3), we appear to be able to employ Groves's method in dealing with Amos 9:11-15, not only to suggest the unity of Hos 12-14 rather than its disunity, and then its authenticity rather than its secondary nature, but also in discussion of similar issues in other books of the prophetic literature.

Our discussion now proceeds, by way of a rhetorical approach, to the structural analysis of each of the three literary sub-sections (A; B; C). This analysis will be undertaken in two stages. First, we will divide each of these three sub-sections (A; B; C) into smaller constituent literary units. Second, we will discuss how the various smaller units interact with each other to constitute each of the three sub-sections a literary whole. In these two

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<sup>3</sup> This verse will be discussed in detail below.

facets of the analysis, various rhetorical devices and patterns such as parallelism, word repetition, word play, chiasm, inclusion, antithesis, and assonance will be explored to examine how they work within and between various smaller literary units to frame smaller and larger literary units.

In order to lay stress on the major inclusion of a constituent literary unit, important repetitions of words, phrases, and lines are indicated by bold type. Repetition *within* each small unit is signified in italics; and that between each small unit is underlined. In contrast to this, the terms repeated in each sub-section (A; B; C) whose repetition functions cumulatively to constitute HOSEA 12-14 as a LITERARY UNITY appears in capital letters.<sup>4</sup>

### III.9 Structural Analysis of Hosea 12:1-15

#### III.9.1 The Analysis of Hosea 12:1-15

##### 12:1-2

1 **EPHRAIM** has surrounded me with deceit,  
and the House of Israel with falsehood.  
Judah still wanders with El;  
and maintains faith with the holy ones.  
2 **EPHRAIM** feeds the wind,  
he pursues the **EAST WIND** all day long.  
He multiplies lies and destruction.  
They make covenant with **ASSYRIA**.  
Oil is carried to **EGYPT**.

סבבני בכחש אפרים  
ובמרמה בית ישראל  
ויהורה עד רר עם אל  
ועם קרושים נאמן  
אפרים רעה רוח  
וררף קרים כל היום  
כזב ושר ירבה  
וברית עם אשור יכרתו  
ושמן למצרים יובל

1) Hos 12:1-2 is separated from the previous 11:11 by the formula נאם יהוה;

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<sup>4</sup> Cf. Buss (1969:6-27); Polan (1986:35-36).



and from the following 12:3ff by ריב in 12:3.

2) In particular, the placement of 12:1-2 at the very beginning of the second section of Hos 12-14 is significant in terms of the close relationship between Hos 4-11 and Hos 12:1-2. As to the relationship of Hos 4-11 to 12:1-2, it would be appropriate to consider the repeated words or phrases or lines which occur in both Hos 4-11 and 12:1-2. In this connection, the words which appear both in Hos 12:1-2 and 4-11 are as follows:

- \*1 אפרים 'Ephraim' in 12:1, 2 occurs in every chapter of Hos 4-11.<sup>5</sup>
- \*2 ישראל 'Israel' in 12:1 appears again in every chapter of Hos 4-11.<sup>6</sup>
- \*3 סבב 'to surround' in 12:1 occurs only once more in Hosea, in 7:2.
- \*4 כחש 'deceit' in 12:1 only appears again in Hosea, in 4:2; 7:3; 9:2; 10:13.
- \*5 רעה 'to feed' in 12:2 (and 13:6) has only two more appearances in Hosea, in 4:16; 9:2.
- \*6 רוח 'wind' in 12:2 (and 13:15) occurs similarly in Hosea as a whole, only in Hos 4-11 (4:12, 19; 5:4; 8:7; 9:7).
- \*7 The pair of כזב 'falsehood' and שר 'violence' in 12:2 occurs outwith these verses, only in Hosea 7:13 and, as noted earlier, the phenomenon is unique in the Old Testament.
- \*8 The pair of אשור 'Assyria' and מצרים 'Egypt' in 12:2 recalls the frequent mention of both Assyria and Egypt in the poetic parallels in 7:11; 9:3; 11:5, 11.

In the light of the word repetitions in Hos 4-11; 12:1-2 (\*\*1-8), the three units of Hos 7:11-16, 11:5-11, and 12:1-2 seem especially closely connected with each other, since the above words (\*\*1, 7, and 8) appear significant for the relationship of Hos 1-11 to Hos 12:1-2. A few scholars have briefly noted an association between these three units in one sentence. For

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<sup>5</sup> Cf. the above III.5.1.5.

<sup>6</sup> While the term אפרים occurs in every chapter of Hos 4-14, in fact the term ישראל occurs in every chapter of Hosea: 1:1, 4, 5, 6; 2:1, 2; 3:1, 4, 5; 4:1, 15, 16; 5:1, 3 (x2), 5 (x2), 9; 6:10 (x2); 7: 1, 10; 8:2, 3, 6, 8, 14; 9:1, 7, 10; 10:1, 6, 8, 9, 15; 11:1, 8; 12:1, 13, 14; 13:1, 9; 14:2, 6.



example, several of the motifs of Hos 7 are met again in Hos 12:1-2 (A/F (471)); Hos 12:2[1]b is related to 7:11 or 11:5 (Wolff (1974:209)). However, I would like to argue in favour of the close relationship between 7:11-16; 11:5-11; and 12:1-2 as follows:

## 2.1) The relationship of 7:11-16 and 12:1-2

The pair construction of שר 'destruction' and כזב 'lies' in 7:13 recurs only in Hosea, in 12:2[1].

Woe to them  
for they have strayed from me!  
Destruction (שר) to them,  
for they have rebelled against me!  
I would redeem them,  
but they speak lies (כזב) againstst me. (7:13)

He multiplies lies (כזב) and destruction (שר). (12:2b)

In 7:13, שר 'destruction' is parallel to און 'woe': in the woe-speech,<sup>7</sup> Yahweh describes his deep agony and compassion as well as the threat of Ephraim's destruction as a consequence of their straying (נרדו) from him: their rebellion (פשע) against him; and their lies (כזב), although he is always ready to save (פרה) Ephraim as he was in the Exodus (cf. Dt 7:8; 9:26; 13:6; 21:8, etc.). In 12:1-2, Yahweh reproaches Ephraim's 'deceit' (כחש) and 'falsehood' (מרמה) (12:1). These two deceptions parallel 'lies' (כזב) and 'destruction' (שר) in 12:2 (Cf. A/F (604)). The unique recurrence of the pair 'lies' and 'destruction', which are used in the same way: Ephraim's lies lead to her destruction in 7:13; 12:2, hence link the literary unit 7:11-16 to 12:1-2.

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<sup>7</sup> Cf. the term occurs once more in Hosea in 9:12

## 2.2) The Relationship of 7:11-16; 11:5-11; and 12:1-2

2.2.1) In these three literary units, 'Ephraim' appears in 7:11; 11:8, 9; 12:1, 2[11:12; 12:1]. In 7:11-16, Hosea consistently lays stress on the flaw in Ephraim's character: Ephraim abandoned her covenant knowledge of Yahweh and her perverted knowledge thereby led her to depend on Assyria and Egypt. The stupidity of Ephraim is underlined in 12:1-2. However, after the disasters of her destruction and exile, Ephraim can recover from her Egyptian and Assyrian experience, and return to Yahweh (11:5-11). The image of Ephraim's renouncement of Assyria and Egypt is further emphasised in the prayer of penitence in 14:2-4[1-3], especially in v4[3]a: 'Assyria will not rescue us; we will not ride on horses'. So, the repetition of אֲפַרַיִם and its consistent use in the motif of Ephraim's foolishness in 7:11; 11:8, 9; 12:1, 2 serve to connect these three literary units (7:11-16; 11:5-11; 12:1-2) together.

2.2.2) In Hosea, 'Egypt' appears thirteen times,<sup>8</sup> whilst 'Assyria' occurs ten times.<sup>9</sup> In the ancient near eastern world Israel had for most of the time been struggling, caught between the super powers, Egypt and Mesopotamia (power in Mesopotamia shifted from Assyria to Babylonia, and then to Persia). In the time of Hosea, Israel was continually tempted to resort to one of the great powers: king Menahem submitted to Tiglath-pileser (2 Kgs 15:19ff.), whilst Pekah took part in the alliance against Assyria (2 Kgs

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<sup>8</sup> 2:17[15]; 7:11, 16; 8:13; 9:3, 6; 11:1, 5, 11; 12:2, 10, 14[1, 9, 13]; 13:4; for a study on 'Egypt' in Hosea, see Wolff (1974:145-146).

<sup>9</sup> 5:13; 7:11; 8:9; 9:3; 10:6; 11:5, 11; 12:2[1]; 13:7; 14:4[3].



15:37); the last king, Hoshea, submitted to Assyria at first, but later resorted to Egypt (2 Kgs 17:4). Israel's relations with Assyria and Egypt hence constitute one of the major motifs of Hosea's prophecy: her political dependence on Assyria and Egypt is the subject of constant condemnation, as it breaks Yahweh's covenant with her. The pairing of 'Assyria' and 'Egypt' (7:11; 9:3; 11:5, 11; 12:1) is particularly significant when discerning the structure of Hosea: not only in identifying the individual literary units 7:11-16; 11:5-11; 12:1-2 but also for perceiving the inter-connection of these three literary units. We will now discuss the passages with the pair 'Assyria' and 'Egypt' with respect to the following order:

2.2.2.1) On the one hand, the pair of 'Egypt' and 'Assyria' mentioned in the synonymous parallelism in 9:3, and, on the other, 'Egypt' in 9:6, and 'Assyria' in 10:6 together constitute a form of ABAB: 'Egypt' (9:3b $\alpha$ ) / 'Assyria' (9:3b $\beta$ ) // 'Egypt' (9:6a) / 'Assyria' (10:6a)<sup>10</sup>.

They shall not dwell in Yahweh's land,  
but Ephraim shall return to Egypt (מצרים),  
and in Assyria (ובאשור) they shall eat unclean food. (9:3)

For behold, they flee from the destruction;  
Egypt (מצרים) shall collect them.  
Memphis shall bury them. (9:6a)

It also shall be carried to Assyria (לאשור),  
as tribute to the Great King. (10:6a)

'Egypt' in 9:3, 6a has a consistent meaning: Israel will escape to Egypt to be

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<sup>10</sup> Cf. A/F (469) note that 'Isolated statements that Israel will return to Egypt (9:6) and will be taken to Assyria --- (10:6) constitute --- pair whose connection should be sought in a larger structure'; and for the rhetorical pattern of ABAB, see Polan (1986:228, 266).



free from Assyria's attack (9:3). However, Egypt will not be a comfortable refuge for Israel, since Egypt shall collect and bury their corpses (9:6a): death is Israel's future destiny. Hence, Israel should have returned to Yahweh for protection from disaster rather than to Egypt. 'Assyria' in 9:3; 10:6a also conveys a consistent motif of Israel's disgrace: Israel will eat unclean food in Assyria (וּבְאֶשׁוּר טֵמֵא יֵאָכְלוּ (9:3bβ)), since in the land of Yahweh she served idols. These will have to be surrendered to the great king of Assyria, the land of idols (10:6a). As a result, they will be disgraced: 'Ephraim shall be put to shame, and Israel shall be ashamed of his idol' (10:6b). The pair 'Egypt' and 'Assyria' in 9:3, and in 9:6; 10:6 therefore serves to lay stress on Israel's foolishness in resorting to Assyria and Egypt.

2.2.2.2) 11:5-11 constitutes a unit, since 1) the pair 'Egypt' and 'Assyria' in 11:5 discerned completes the equivalent form in 11:11; and 2) the two verses form an inclusion also in the use of אֶרֶץ 'land' in both v5a and v11a<sup>11</sup>:

He shall return to the land of Egypt (מִצְרַיִם),  
and Assyria (וְאַשּׁוּר) shall be his king,  
because they have refused to return.<sup>12</sup> (11:5)

They shall come trembling like birds from Egypt (מִמִּצְרַיִם),  
and like a dove from the land of Assyria (אַשּׁוּר). (11:11a)

These two verses constitute another pattern of ABAB: 'Egypt' (11:5α) / 'Assyria' (11:5β) // 'Egypt' (11:11α) / 'Assyria' (11:11β). Verse 5 describes Yahweh's punishment of Israel and the resulting flight and deportation to Egypt and Assyria; v11 describes the return of Israel's exiles from Assyria, and of refugees from Egypt. The two appearances of the pair 'Egypt' and

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<sup>11</sup> Cf. A/F (575).

<sup>12</sup> On this rendering, see IV.1.1.1.11:5 below.

'Assyria' in 11:5, 11 also serves not only to constitute 11:5-11 as a unit but to lay emphasis on the stupidity of Israel's dependence on Egypt and Assyria, comparing her deeds to those of birds and doves.

2.2.2.3) The parallel construction of 'Assyria' and 'Egypt' recurs in 12:2[1]:

They make covenant with Assyria (אֲשׁוּר).  
Oil is carried to Egypt (לְמִצְרַיִם).

In 12:2, the foolishness of Ephraim is criticised as in 7:11; 11:11, since the deeds of Ephraim who pursues the east wind and makes covenant with Assyria and Egypt are simply vain and useless, resulting in her destruction.

2.2.2.4) Finally, the pair construction of 'Assyria' and 'Egypt' occurs in 7:11 and 11:11 respectively, and יוֹנָה 'dove' in 7:11 only recurs in Hosea, in 11:11, which appear to indicate the close relationship between these two literary units:

Ephraim is like a dove, silly and senseless.  
They call to Egypt (מִצְרַיִם), they go to Assyria (אֲשׁוּר). (7:11)

They shall come trembling like birds from Egypt (מִמִּצְרַיִם),  
and like a dove from the land of Assyria (אֲשׁוּר);  
and I will settle them to their houses, says Yahweh. (11:11)

Hosea compares Ephraim to a silly dove, easily deceived and enticed (7:11); to his eyes Ephraim's reliance on Assyria and Egypt instead of Yahweh is simply a vain hope. In 11:11, the metaphor of the dove was applied to the exile in Assyria and to deportees in Egypt, who by way of Yahweh's saving act will return home from the foreign lands. So, Hosea's message is that Ephraim should admit her stupidity in relying on Assyria and Egypt, and respond to Yahweh as her real saviour. The unique repetition of יוֹנָה and its



consistent theme of Ephraim's being like a silly dove in 7:11; 11:11 therefore suggests the connection of 7:11-16 to 11:5-11.

In summary, the fivefold pairing of 'Assyria' and 'Egypt' in 7:11; 9:3; 11:5, 11; 12:2 and the consistent theme of Israel's political resort to Egypt and Assyria, instead of reliance on Yahweh closely link Hos 7:11-16; 11:5-11; 12:1-2. Israel's resort to the two foreign powers has been unacceptable to Hosea's eyes, leading to her destruction. Hubbard (1989:200-201) puts it similarly: 'Courting two enemies at the same time was not only an act of disloyalty to God but an act of political madness which was destined to bring down the wrath of both nations on them.'

2.3) In the light of the close links between 7:11-16; 11:5-11; 12:1-2, it is our view that the rhetorical function of Hos 12:1-2 at the very beginning of the literary unit Hos 12-14 lies not only in connecting Hos 4-11 and 12:3ff,<sup>13</sup> but also in recalling and summarising the previous motifs of Hos 4-11; and in anticipating new motifs in the following 12:3ff, for example, מרמה 'falsehood' in 12:1, 8.

3.1) As discussed above, from the presence of אֶפְרַיִם 'Ephraim' in both 12:1a and 14:9a, we may argue that 12:1a forms an inclusion and distant parallel with 14:9a, so constituting Hos 12-14 as a literary unity. Hos 12:1-2 describes Yahweh's complaints about Ephraim's falsehood, which has led to Yahweh's judgment. In contrast, in 14:9, within a whole context of

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<sup>13</sup> Cf. Buss (1969:32) notes that Hos 12:1-2[11:12-12:1] connects Hos 12:3-14:1 with earlier material.



salvation, Yahweh's judgment against Ephraim brings them freedom from their deceitful life when they turn from idolatry. The falsehood of Ephraim is emphasised by the repetition of מרמה in 12:1, 8: the first occurrence of מרמה in 12:1 has an anticipatory function in this literary context. The importance of this term related to Israel's false life is confirmed by Jacob's life (vv4-5, 13);<sup>14</sup> and is emphasised by the repetition of the term מרמה in 12:8.

3.2) The repetition of the term אפרים at the very beginning of 12:2 serves to highlight the subject of Ephraim,<sup>15</sup> who is deeply involved in feeding the 'wind' (רוח), and in pursuing the 'east wind' (קרים), the image of Ephraim's foolishness in dependence on 'Assyria' and 'Egypt' (v2b). Both רוח and קרים recur in 13:15, in which, however, the term קרים, which represents the Assyrian army, will be an instrument of Yahweh's judgment.

4) Thus, the rhetorical devices involving the terms אפרים, מרמה, רוח, קרים, אשור, and מצרים in 12:1-2 all function 1) to lay stress on Ephraim's falsehood of idolatry, and of reliance on human powers, Assyria and Egypt, against Yahweh; and 2) both to summarise the motifs of Hos 4-11 and to anticipate Hos 12:3ff.

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<sup>14</sup> This issue will be discussed below.

<sup>15</sup> Similarly, Hubbard (1989:198).

## 12:3

YAHWEH has a dispute with ISRAEL,  
to punish Jacob according to his ways;  
according to his deeds he will repay him.

ורִיב ליהוה עם יִשְׂרָאֵל  
ולפקר על יעקב כדרכיו  
במעלליו ישיב לו

The Hebrew רִיב 'to have a dispute' occurs five times in Hosea (2:4[2] (x2); 4:1, 4; 12:3[2]); in each instance it serves to separate a unit from one that precedes, and begins a new unit, either small or large (2:4ff.; 4:1ff., 4ff.; 12:3ff.). So רִיב in 12:3a functions to distinguish 12:3ff from the immediately preceding literary unit 12:1-2.

As to יהודה 'Judah' in the MT in 12:3a, it is probable that we should read יִשְׂרָאֵל 'Israel' for יהודה 'Judah' in the MT in the light of the structure and context of Hos 12: if we regard the original name as 'Israel' rather than 'Judah', the two names יִשְׂרָאֵל 'Israel' and יַעֲקֹב 'Jacob', and the two etymologies עָקַב 'to take' and 'to contend' respectively stand in a chiasmic form:

- (A) יִשְׂרָאֵל (v3a)
- (B) יַעֲקֹב (v3b)
- (B') עָקַב (v4aα)
- (A') שָׂרָה (v4aβ)

Conversely, if Judah is regarded as the contemporary defendant, Israel, Hosea's original audience is ruled out, since the indictment and punishment is to be applied to the same community. Therefore, it is manifest that Israel, not Judah, was the subject of the saying in 12:3 in its original form. In this case, the one accused in v3a is also the one to be punished in vv4-5; and the parallel 'Judah' is out of context in vv3-5, since the passage is concerned with the life of Jacob and his involvement with Bethel and

Jabbok. Substitution of 'Judah' for 'Israel' may have occurred, because Jacob was one of the ancestors of Israel/Judah, and after the fall of the northern kingdom, of Jacob's descendants only Judah remained. In this sense, by way of substitution, a Judean redactor may have attempted to deflect Yahweh's judgment over Judah through highlighting her need for repentance: the original form of Hosea's sayings had been transmitted within, and applied to Judah, so as to bring about a new situation – no longer one of judgment but of salvation. However, it should be immediately noted that the detection of this substitution does not mean all references to Judah are Judaic redaction,<sup>1</sup> since every passage requires individual analysis and evaluation.

Hos 12:3b is significant in distinguishing the literary units of the following verses 4–15. In v3b $\alpha$ , יַעֲקֹב 'Jacob' has a double function: the name refers both to the patriarch Jacob, and to the Israel contemporary with Hosea. In this regard, v3b $\alpha$  (וּלְפָקֵד עַל יַעֲקֹב כִּדְרָבּוֹ 'to punish Jacob according to his ways') refers to Jacob the ancestor of Israel as in vv4–5, 13, whilst v3b $\beta$  (בְּמַעֲלָלָיו יִשְׁבּוּ לוֹ 'according to his deeds he will repay him') refers to Israel of Hosea's time, for the following reasons:

1) Hosea reviewed the tradition of Jacob and his tricky character in order to condemn the falsehood of contemporary Israel. In this sense, the image of Jacob in Hos 12:4–5, 13 is negative,<sup>2</sup> since these verses are set in a literary

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<sup>1</sup> Cf. 'Judah' occurs fifteen times in Hosea (MT) (1:1, 7; 2:2[1:11]; 4:15; 5:5, 10, 12, 13, 14; 6:4, 11; 8:14; 10:11; 12:1, 3[11:12; 12:2]). For a detailed discussion of this issue, see Emmerson (1984:56–116).

<sup>2</sup> For a review of both the positive and negative character of Jacob in Hos 12, see Neef (1987:25ff.).



context (Hos 12), involving widespread condemnation of Israel's guilt, followed by the prediction of Yahweh's punishment as in v3b $\alpha$ : 'to punish Jacob according to his ways'. In this connection, 'Jacob' in vv4-5 and 13 is to be seen negatively: in v4, עֲקַב 'to grasp by the heel, cheat' is assonant with יַעֲקֹב 'Jacob'. The usage of the terms עֲקַב and יַעֲקֹב is reminiscent of Gen 27:36:

And he said, 'Is he not rightly named Jacob (יַעֲקֹב)? For he has supplanted me (וַיַּעֲקֹבֵנִי) these two times. He took away my birthright; and behold, now he has taken away my blessing'. Then he said, 'Have you not reserved a blessing for me?'

In this verse, by using the verb עֲקַב, Esau condemned Jacob's deception; and in the immediately previous verse (Gen 27:35), their father Isaac described the deed of Jacob in terms of מִרְמָה 'falsehood' as in Hos 12:1, 8: 'But he said, "Your brother came with falsehood (בִּמְרֹמָה), and he has taken away your blessing."' Moreover, in Hos 12:13a, Hosea uses בָּרַח 'to flee, run away' ('Jacob fled (וַיִּבְרַח) to the land of Aram'), whilst in the parallel verse of Gen 28:5, the corresponding verb is הָלַךְ 'to go, come, walk' ('Thus Isaac sent Jacob away; and he went (וַיֵּלֶךְ) to Paddan-aram to Laban'). So, in the literary context of Hos 12, the Jacob tradition is a negative one.<sup>3</sup>

2) The clause לוֹ יָשִׁיב 'he will repay him' (12:3b $\beta$ ; cf. 4:9b $\beta$ ) appears again in Hos 12-14, only in 12:15b. In this context, the recurrence of the clause in v15 ('(His Lord) will return to him (לוֹ יָשִׁיב) (his reproach)') makes it certain that as a result of the guilt of contemporary Israel, Yahweh's corresponding

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<sup>3</sup> Cf. recently Hoffman (1989:172) notes similarly: 'the review of the history of the patriarchs in verses 1-8 is actually a list of sins and insurgency.'

punishment is inevitable. In this sense, the clause in v3bβ ('according to his deeds, he will repay him (יָשִׁיב לוֹ)') also refers to Yahweh's announcement of punishment on the Israel of Hosea's time. The repetition of the root שׁוּב in the hiphil form (יָשִׁיב לוֹ) in vv3, 15 thus serves as a key word in 12:1-15, verifying that Yahweh will repay for Israel's evil deeds with a corresponding punishment.

Therefore, in the literary context of Hos 12:1-15, the one indicted is contemporary Israel,<sup>4</sup> not Jacob the patriarch: Hosea's primary concern is with Israel in the present rather than in the past. This may be why Hosea completed Yahweh's threat with reference to 'Ephraim' rather than 'Israel' in v15, and, in the context of salvation (14:2-9[1-8]), concluded on the theme of the luxuriant life of 'Ephraim' rather than that of 'Israel' in 14:9: since, as noted earlier, 'Ephraim' (basically meaning prosperity) may be used to secure a word play: her involvement in the cult of Baal of fertility is to lead her to infertility rather than fertility, which is to stem from Yahweh.

In the following verses 4-14, we can see a regular pattern of the alternating themes: through review of the deceitful character of Jacob her ancestor, the falsehood and unrighteousness of contemporary Israel are seen in contrast to the truth/fidelity/faithfulness of Yahweh.

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<sup>4</sup> Cf. similarly, Mays (1969:162) notes: 'The suit is against the contemporary nation (Israel) but the name of Jacob is introduced in preparation for vv4ff., where the career of Israel's ancestor is reviewed as a way of establishing the nation's guilt'.



12:4-5

4 In the womb he took his BROTHER,  
in his manhood he *contended with* GOD.  
5 He *contended with* an angel and prevailed;  
He wept and sought his favour;  
at Bethel he used to meet him  
and there he would speak to him.

בבטן עקב את אחיו  
ובאונן שרה את אלהים  
וישר אל מלאך ויכל  
בכה ויתחנן לו  
בית אל ימצאנו  
ושם ידבר עמנו

As noted above, in the name 'Jacob' the character of his falsehood is implied by the assonance 'עקב' 'Jacob' (v3b) - 'עקב' 'to take by the heels' (in the sense of 'to cheat') (v4a). In the light of the pejorative interpretation of v4a, the meaning of 'שרה' 'to contend' in the parallel colon v4b is also negative. The subsequent career of Jacob's falsehood is highlighted by repetition of 'שרה' 'to contend' at the very beginning of v5aα ('וישר אל מלאך' 'he contended with an angel'), and also by the following verbs 'יכל' 'to prevail', 'בכה' 'to weep', and 'חנן' 'to seek a favour' in v5aβ. Verse 5b ('at Bethel he used to meet him and there he would speak to him') has a double function: on the one hand, it serves to emphasise Yahweh's response to Jacob's supplication, and on the other, it is introduced to contrast the tricky nature of Jacob and Israel to Yahweh's fidelity in vv6ff. In v5b, Hosea notes that in spite of Jacob's falsehood, Yahweh answered to Jacob's petition at Bethel.

12:6-7

6 YAHWEH is the GOD of the Hosts;  
YAHWEH is his memorial.  
7 So you, by the help of your GOD,  
should return;  
Keep love and justice,  
wait for your GOD continually.

ויהוה אלהי הצבאות  
יהוה זכרו  
ואתה באלהיך  
תשוב  
חסד ומשפט שמר  
וקוה אל אלהיך תמיד

In v6, through the proclamation of the name of God in a liturgical



formulation, Hosea reminds contemporary Israel of who their God is. The repetition of יהוה at the very beginning of the two cola: ויהוה אלהי הצבאות 'but *Yahweh* is the God of Hosts, *Yahweh* is his memorial', lays stress on the fact that *Yahweh* is the God for Israel at all times. This verse is reminiscent of the hymnic passages of Ex 15:3; Ps 102:13[12]; 135:13. In v7, the repetition of אלהיך 'your God' serves to emphasise again that *Yahweh* is the sole God for Israel, to whom she should therefore return. The term אלהיך 'your God' occurs seven times in Hosea, in which it appears five times in Hos 12-14 (12:7 (x2), 10[6, 9]; 13:4; 14:2[1]; 4:6; 9:1). Its frequency in the section again lays stress on the fact that *Yahweh* is the only God for Israel's salvation.

In short, the twofold use of יהוה and threefold occurrences of אלהים in vv6-7 emphasise the fidelity of *Yahweh* to Israel, to whom she should return: since he has been the only God throughout her history.

### 12:8-9

8 Canaan, in his hands are false scales.

He loves to oppress.

9 EPHRAIM SAID,

'Indeed I have become rich;

I have found wealth for myself.

All my toils will not find for myself

any GUILT that is sin.'

בנען בידו מאזני מרמה

לעשק אהב

ויאמר אפרים

אך עשרתי

מצאתי און לי

כל יגיעי לא ימצאו לי

עון אשר חטא

In vv8-9, Hosea turns to the contrast between contemporary Ephraim's falsehood and *Yahweh*'s fidelity (vv6-7). In v8, בנען 'Canaan' can be regarded

both as the inhabitant of the promised land and as a trader or a merchant.<sup>5</sup> Here Hosea condemns contemporary Ephraim by calling her 'Canaan'. She has become deeply involved in the Canaanite Baal cult of land fertility, and hence lost her identity as the people of Yahweh. As a result, Ephraim, like a Canaanite trader, uses 'false scales' (מאזני מרמה) for profit. This phrase is typical of those used to describe unjust commercial dealings.<sup>6</sup> In v9, Hosea, exposes Ephraim's Canaanite merchant-like behaviour, by quoting her own words: in her own sayings, Ephraim insists that her wealth collected by falsehood and oppression (v8) is clear from any criticism. But this is evidence against her, since such evil riches lead to perverse relationships between neighbours, who should love each other.

The repetition of מרמה 'falsehood' (12:8), which had already appeared in the important literary unit Hos 12:1-2, serves to highlight Ephraim's falsehood; deceit which provokes Yahweh bitterly (מרמה תמרורים) in v15. In the light of the overall literary context, the occurrence of מרמה in 12:8, therefore, functions as a key word in the large sub-section Hos 12:1-15.

#### 12:10-11

10 But I AM YAHWEH YOUR GOD  
FROM THE LAND OF EGYPT.

Once more I will make you dwell in tents  
as in the days of meeting.

11 I spoke to *the prophets*.

It was *I* who multiplied visions.

Through *the prophets* I gave parables.

ואנכי יהוה אלהיך  
מארץ מצרים  
ער אושיבך באהלים  
כימי מועד  
ודברתי על הנביאים  
ואנכי חזון הרביתי  
וביר הנביאים אדמה

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<sup>5</sup> Cf. Pr 31:24; Job 40:30[41:6]; Ezek 17:4; Zeph 1:11; Dearman (1988:35-36).

<sup>6</sup> Am 8:5b; Pr 11:1; 20:23; cf. Mi 6:11.



In contrast to Ephraim's own testimony, her boastful self-righteousness in regard to her unjust wealth, Yahweh proclaims his constant righteousness and fidelity to Ephraim by his self-introductory formula (v10a): 'I am Yahweh your God from the land of Egypt'. In particular, the phrase 'Yahweh your God' (יהוה אלהיך) occurring only three times in Hosea, in 12:10; 13:4; 14:2 serves to stress the fact that Yahweh, the God of Exodus, is her sole saviour. So she is to return to Yahweh for her salvation, turning away from her guilt in involvement with the cult of Baal. The formula is once more repeated in Hosea in 13:4a, again emphasising that Yahweh is the unique saviour of Ephraim. Thus, as her ancestors did, Ephraim might once more have to dwell in tents in the wilderness, in order to hear Yahweh's words aimed at restoring a right relationship with him (v10). This will be so, since Yahweh has truthfully and repeatedly revealed his will through prophets (v11), which is stressed by the twofold use of הנביאים 'the prophets'. The use of the emphatic formula, and of הנביאים therefore emphasises Yahweh's faithfulness to Ephraim.

## 12:12

If Gilead be evil,  
they surely have become worthless.  
In Gilgal they SACRIFICED bulls.  
Their altars too were like stone heaps  
on the furrows of the field.

אם גלעד רע  
אך שוא היו  
בגלגל שורים זבח  
גם מזבחותם בגלים  
על תלמי שרי

Hosea returns to the guilt of the Israel of his time, stemming from her pagan worship at Gilead and Gilgal. Verse 12aα does not specify the nature of the sin at Gilead (cf. 6:8). However, in the light of the parallelism of



Gilead with Gilgal in v12aβ, and of the term זָבַח 'to sacrifice' in v12aβ, which occurs again in 13:4, serving to connect 12:1-15 to 13:1-14:1, it is evident that he condemns Israel's cultic perversion at Gilead and Gilgal. As a consequence of their perversion, Gilead's fate has become worthless (שוא), and the altars at Gilgal are useless; their cult is false, empty, and in vain (שוא). The Baal cult of fertility resulted in the futility of falsehood. So, in v12, Hosea, taking up the theme of falsehood in v8, contrasts the falsehood of Israel's cult to the faithfulness of Yahweh, the God of the Exodus, and of his words proclaimed by his prophets (vv10-11). This is done in order to reveal the guilt of Israel and so to lead her to return to him.

#### 12:13-14

13 Jacob fled to the land of Aram.

ISRAEL served *for a wife*,  
for a wife he was a keeper.

14 By a prophet YAHWEH brought ISRAEL up  
from Egypt

By a prophet he was kept.

ויברח יעקב שרה ארם

ויעבר ישראל באשה

ובאשה שמר

ובנביא העלה יהוה את ישראל

ממצרים

ובנביא נשמר

Hosea turns to the Jacob tradition once more, in which, as in vv4-5, he is described as a fragile human: as noted above, Hosea uses בָּרַח 'to flee' for הָלַךְ 'to go' in Gen 28:5. The use of בָּרַח may have come from Hosea's understanding that Jacob deceived Esau,<sup>7</sup> as is alluded to in Hos 12:4. In this sense, the following two cola are to be interpreted in the same literary context: the repetition of באשה refers to Jacob's servanthip 'for a wife', although it is difficult to decide whether it alludes specifically to Israel's

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<sup>7</sup> Cf. Stuart (1987:195) noted that 'Jacob's "flight" to Paddan-aram was undertaken on the instruction of his father (Gen 28:5)', in which, however, בָּרַח is not used.

sexual cult of Baal.<sup>8</sup>

On the other hand, in v14, the repetition of בִּנְיָא 'by a prophet' lays stress on Yahweh's fidelity to Israel, which originated with the prophet Moses in the Exodus. The twofold occurrence of בִּנְיָא in v13 and בִּנְיָא in v14 respectively, hence serves to identify vv13-14 as a constituent literary unit, contrasting Jacob's servanthip for a wife to Yahweh's prophet Moses' servanthip for Israel.

### 12:15

**EPHRAIM** has given bitter provocation.  
He will leave his bloodguilt on him.  
His Lord will return to him his reproach.

הַבַּעִים אֶפְרַיִם תַּמְרוּרִים  
וּרְמִיז עָלָיו יְטוּשׁ  
וְחָרְפָּתוֹ יָשִׁיב לוֹ אֲדֹנָיו

The repetition of אֶפְרַיִם 'Ephraim' (vv1, 15), and מַרְמָה '(bitter) falsehood' (vv1, 15) forms an inclusion and distant parallel, making a frame for the literary unit Hos 12:1-15; and the repetition of יָשִׁיב לוֹ 'he will return to him' (vv3, 15) serves to confirm the fact that Yahweh as plaintiff, prosecutor, and judge to the defendant Ephraim, will return Ephraim's reproach upon her in order to recover the lordship of Yahweh. Because her iniquity disgraces his lordship, Yahweh's punishment will be inevitable.

### III.9.2 The Literary Unity of Hosea 12:1-15

At first sight there appears to be no literary unity in Hos 12:1-15, mainly

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<sup>8</sup> Cf. Wolff (1974:216).

because of seemingly random changes in theme. In fact, there are few word repetitions linking each of the above individual literary units. However, with the summary of Hos 4-11 within 12:1-2, anticipating motifs of 12:3-15, the rhetorical device of antithesis recurring three times in vv4-14, and the presence of an inclusion with distant parallelism in vv1, 15, it is apparent that Hos 12:1-15 is a literary unity. Within it each individual literary unit of 12:4-14 is connected with the other by the antithesis of the falsehood of Israel (the past Israel revealed by her ancestor Jacob in vv4-5; and the contemporary Israel of Hosea's time in vv8-9, 12), and of the truth of Yahweh (vv6-7, 10-11, 13-14). The major purpose of this literary pattern: the contrast between the sin of Israel, past and present, and the truth of Yahweh, lies in revealing more manifestly the guilt of Hosea's Israel, and so also in exhorting in Israel's return to Yahweh, since he is her sole saviour throughout.

In the light of the above structural analysis of Hos 12, this large literary sub-section demonstrates the following pattern:<sup>9</sup>

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<sup>9</sup> Cf. Stuart (1987:188) suggests the outline of Hos 12 as follows:

- Introduction: Israel a deceiver (vv1-2)
- Announcement of the lawsuit (v3)
- Yahweh*: the God of Jacob's renaming at Peniel and Bethel (vv4-6)
- Invitation to return to Yahweh (v7)
- Israel's deceit like that of "Canaan" (vv8-9)
- Yahweh*: Israel's benefactor, judge, and revealer (vv10-11)
- Examples of deceit: Gilead and Gilgel (v12)
- Yahweh*: benefactor of Jacob/Israel on the move (vv13-14)
- Announcement of judgment (vv12:15-13:1)



Introduction (vv1-2)

Indictment (v3)

(A) The falsehood of Israel (vv4-5)

(B) The truth of Yahweh (vv6-7)

(A') The falsehood of Israel (vv8-9)

(B') The truth of Yahweh (vv10-11)

(A'') The falsehood of Israel (v12)

(B'') The truth of Yahweh (vv13-14)

Judgment (v15)

Our discussion now turns to the structural analyses of Hosea 13:1-14:1.

### III.10 Structural Analysis of Hosea 13:1-14:1

#### III.10.1 The Analysis of Hosea 13:1-14:1

While the small constituent literary units of Hos 12:1-15 are delimited mainly by the antithesis between the falsehood of Israel and the truth of Yahweh, those of Hos 13:1-14:1[13:16] are divided by reference to the dominant personal pronouns of each literary unit. We may accordingly delimit Hos 13:1-14:1 as follows:

- 1) vv1-3 ('he' (v1); 'they' (vv2-3))
- 2) vv4-8 ('I')
- 3) vv9-11 ('you')
- 4) vv12-13 ('he')
- 5) v14 ('I')
- 6) vv15-14:1 ('he' (v15); 'she' (v14:1a); 'they' (v14:1b))

#### 13:1-3

1 When EPHRAIM spoke, there was trembling;  
he was exalted in ISRAEL.  
But he became guilty through Baal and died.  
2 Now they continue to SIN;  
they have made a molten image for themselves,  
IDOLS from their silver according to their skill;  
all of it is the WORK of craftsmen.

כדבר אפרים רתת  
נשא הוא בישראל  
ויאשם בבעל וימת  
ועתה יוספו לחטא  
ויעשו להם מסכה  
מכספם כתבונם עצבים  
מעשה חרשים בלה

'To them', they SAY, 'MAKE SACRIFICE.'

Humans kiss calves.

3 Therefore they will be like morning mist,  
and like DEW that goes away early.

Like chaff blown from the threshing floor  
and like smoke from the window.

להם הם אמרים זבח

אדם עגלים ישקון

לבן יהיו בענו בקר

ובטל משבים הלך

במץ יסער מגרן

ובעשן מארבה

Verse 1 serves to determine the overall structure of Hos 13:1-14:1, and provides the dominant theme of the chapter with the repetition of the following words:

1) אפרים 'Ephraim' in v1a and אשם 'to become guilty' in v1b together make an inclusive frame for the whole of Hos 13:1-14:1 by distant parallelism with שמרון 'Samaria' and אשם in 14:1a. The rhetorical devices of inclusion and distant parallelism both lay emphasis on the fact that the guilt of Ephraim is clear, and especially that of Samaria, the capital city.

2) The 3 s m personal pronoun הוּא 'he' referring to Ephraim in v1 appears again in both v13aβ and v15aα. הוּא in v1b is used in the description of Ephraim's superiority within Israel ('*he* was exalted in Israel'), and similarly in v15aα, הוּא refers to Ephraim's abundant life among brothers ('Though *he* may flourish among brothers'). However, in spite of his prosperity, in v13aβ, Hosea laments over the foolishness of Ephraim ('*he* is an unwise child') in his lack of knowledge of God; he is not aware of the proper time to return to Yahweh, when judgment is impending.

3) מוֹת 'to die' in v1b recurs twice in v14. In v1b ('But he became guilty through Baal and *died*'), Hosea proclaims that in his early history Ephraim

*died* as a result of his guilt through involvement with Baal,<sup>1</sup> whilst the repetition of מוֹת in v14aβ-bα ('Shall I redeem from *death*? Where are your plagues, o *death*?') serves to emphasise his deep involvement in the Baal worship leading to the inevitable punishment of death.

The repetition of these words (מוֹת, אֵשׁ, הוּא, אֲפָרִים) of v1 thus anticipates the theme developed throughout 13:1-14:1 - Ephraim's unavoidable destruction in death as a consequence of his guilt in idolatry.

As in the case of their ancestors (v1), in v2, with עַתָּה 'now' at the very beginning of the verse, Hosea condemns the guilt of his contemporaries. The nature of their guilt of idolatry is described by the terms in v2: חָטָא 'to sin', עֲצָבִים 'idols', מַעֲשֵׂה 'work', זָבַח 'to sacrifice', and אָמַר 'to say'. These words all lay stress on Ephraim's own wilful moving away from Yahweh towards idols.

As a result of Ephraim's idolatry, לָכֵן 'therefore' at the very beginning of v3 introduces the announcement of Yahweh's punishment taking the form of a judicial decision as in 2:8, 11, 16[6, 9, 14]. Verse 3aβ is the repetition of 6:4b: כַּעֲנַן בֹּקֶר וְכַטְל מִשְׁבִּים הֵלֶךְ (וְחִסְרָבָם) '(Your love is) like morning mist, and like the dew that goes away early'. In particular the fourfold use of כ 'like' emphasises that Ephraim will immediately fade away: *like* morning

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<sup>1</sup> בַּעַל occurs elsewhere in Hosea in 2:10,15,18,19; 11:12. The occurrence of בַּעַל in 13:1 indicates that Ephraim's idolatry of Baal is one of his major offences against Yahweh. The repetition of בַּעַל in Hosea is in contrast to Amos, Hosea's contemporary. In Amos, בַּעַל does not appear at all.



mist, *like* dew, *like* chaff, and *like* smoke. Therefore, the repetition of the clause in 6:4b; 13:3a, and of the preposition כ in 13:3 emphasise that Yahweh's punishment corresponds to the inconsistency of Ephraim's love.

### 13:4-8

Verses 4-8 are distinguished from vv1-3 by Yahweh's speaking in the first person. In v4a, the self-introductory formula appears again:

***I AM YAHWEH YOUR GOD***  
***FROM THE LAND OF EGYPT***

ואנכי יהוה אלהיך  
מארץ מצרים

In 13:4a, the repetition of the formula which already occurred in 12:10a lays stress on the fact that Yahweh is ever faithful to Ephraim, from the Exodus onwards: he alone is their God; and hence anticipates Israel's responsibility of sole loyalty to Yahweh from the immediately following passage (v4b):

You should not know any GOD *except me*  
for there is no SAVIOUR *except me*

ואלהים זולתי לא תרע  
ומושע אין בלתי

In this significant passage, the employment of ירע in v4ba underlines this word's importance: the term is used to emphasise the obligation for Israel to maintain a consistently right relationship to Yahweh, and to him alone; he is the only saviour for Ephraim. The idea of ירע is reflected throughout the sub-section 13:1-14:1, especially in vv6, 13, in which both שכח 'to forget' (v6) and לא חכם 'unwise' (v13) are in contrast to ירע in v4. Therefore, in this context, although it is used only once in 13:1-14:1 (even to 14:9), the term ירע in this significant passage 13:4 marks it as a key word of 13:1-14:1: the term 'provides a precis. Israel was commended to acknowledge

Yahweh alone'.<sup>2</sup>

Verses 5-6 reflect, in contrast to v4, Israel's ingratitude to Yahweh's special grace towards them:

*5 It was <i>I</i> who fed you in the wilderness in the land of drought	אני רעתיך במדבר בארץ תלאבות
6 According to <i>their</i> pasture, <i>they</i> were filled when <i>they</i> were filled, <i>their</i> heart was lifted up <u>Therefore</u> <i>they</i> forgot me	במרעיתם וישבעו שבעו וירם לבם על-בן שכחוני

As noted in the earlier chapter of Textual Criticism, the problem of the correct reading in v5 remains – whether ירעתיך (MT; Vul) or רע(י)תיך (LXX; Syr; Tar). On rhetorical grounds the latter reading seems to be appropriately connected to the following word במרעיתם in v6a: despite Yahweh's reminder of the true loyalty of Israel to know no God but Yahweh (v4), vv5-6 describe the ingratitude of Israel to the special grace of Yahweh towards Israel. Yahweh, as the good shepherd to Israel, had miraculously 'fed' Israel in the wilderness (v5). However, Israel's response was that, according to their 'pasture', they have shown pride and rebellion against Yahweh, leading to their forgetting him (v6). In the light of the continuing motif of feeding in vv5, 6, we opt for רע(י)תיך.<sup>3</sup> In this case, we may suppose that the frequent association of ירע and שבה in Hosea may have had influence on the MT ירע: רעה in v5 may have been changed to ירע because of the known

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<sup>2</sup> Stuart (1987:209); cf. Wolff (1974:226); A/F (634-635); for more discussions on the knowledge of God/Yahweh in Hosea, see ירע in IV.5 below; and Baumann (1908; 1955); Reiss (1940-41); Wolff (1952-53b); McKenzie (1955); Crotty (1971); Schottroff (1971); Harrison (1976); Bergman (1982); and Holt (1987).

<sup>3</sup> This reading has been followed by Wellhausen, Marti, Ewald, Duhm, Harper, Wolff, Rudolph, Mays, JB, NJB, NAB, NEB, and REB.



association between a key word of Hosea יָדָע and שָׁכַח, since the latter is used as the opposite word of the former in Hosea: שָׁכַח is used in Hosea five times (2:15[13]; 4:6 (x2); 8:14; 13:6). Every time (except 4:6bβ) the word is employed to emphasise Israel's forgetting Yahweh (and his grace and words), who in contrast knows her intimately. A/F (262) pointed out the importance of שָׁכַח, as the opposite term of יָדָע in Hosea, against the background of the Deuteronomic tradition: 'In the Hebrew Bible, especially in the Deuteronomic tradition, remembering, knowing, and obeying are aspects of covenant-keeping. Hosea's emphasis on "knowing" Yahweh (4:6; 6:3-6; 13:4-6) shows that forgetting, being treacherous (5:7; 6:7), and rebelling are the opposite. Forgetting is willful and culpable.' So, יָדָעַתִּי in 13:5a may also be used to contrast Yahweh's knowledge of Israel with their forgetting him (שָׁכַחוּנִי) in v6.

In v6, the repetition of the third person plural forms ('According to *their* pasture, *they* were filled; when *they* were filled, *their* heart was lifted up. Therefore *they* forgot me.') emphasises Ephraim's indulgence of their own desires, pride, and arrogance, demonstrating their ingratitude to Yahweh; their sole saviour, and the shepherd who has filled them. The consequence is introduced by עַל כֵּן 'therefore'<sup>4</sup>: 'therefore they *forgot* me'. The idea of שָׁכַח 'to forget' is, as noted above, in contrast to the motif of יָדָע 'to know' in 13:4, as in 2:15[13]; 4:6; 8:14.

In vv7-8, the guilt following Ephraim's ignorance of Yahweh is threatened as deserving the most severe kind of punishment.

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<sup>4</sup> עַל כֵּן occurs again in Hosea, in 4:3, 13; 6:5.



7 I will be to them *like* a lion  
*like* a leopard by the way of Assyria  
 8 I will fall upon them *like* a bereaved bear  
 I will tear open *their heart*  
 I will devour them there *like* a lion  
 wild beasts shall *tear* them

ואהי להם במן-שחל  
 בנמר על-דרך אשור  
 אפגשם ברב שכול  
 ואקרע סגור לבם  
 ואכלם שם בלביא  
 חית השרה תבקעם

Yahweh is pictured as a violent wild beast who attacks and eats his prey, with the fourfold use of כ: *like* a lion, *like* a leopard (v7), *like* a bereaved bear, and *like* a lion (v8). Yahweh's punishment is the most severe form, Ephraim's death, as announced in v14. The fourfold repetition of כ in vv7-8 matches the usage of כ in v3, in which Hosea announces that Ephraim will in a short time be annihilated by Yahweh's punishment. Even ironically, the repetition of לב 'heart' in vv6, 8 ('Their *heart* was lifted up' (v6); 'I will tear open (the enclosure of) their *heart*' (v8)) serves to highlight how severe Yahweh's punishment of Ephraim's arrogant heart will be. The cruelty of the punishment is conclusively expressed by בקע 'to tear' in v8bβ ('Wild beasts shall *tear* them open'). בקע recurs only in Hosea in 14:1b ('Their pregnant women shall be *torn* open'). The repetition of בקע in 13:8bβ; 14:1bβ and its placement at the very end of the concluding passages of each unit (13:4-8; 13:15-14:1) marks it as a key word of 13:1-14:1, underlining this theme of Yahweh's furious punishment.

### 13:9-11

9 Your destruction, O ISRAEL!;  
 who indeed will be your helper?  
 10 Where now is your *king*  
 that he may SAVE you in all your cities?  
 And your rulers, of whom you SAID,  
 'Give me a *king* and princes'?  
 11 I may give you a *king* in my ANGER  
 I may take him away in my wrath.

שחתך ישראל  
 כי מי בעוזרך  
 איה מלכך אפוא  
 ויושיעך בכל עריך  
 ושפטיך אשר אמרת  
 תגה לי מלך ושרים  
 אתן לך מלך באפי  
 ואקח בעברתי

In vv9-11, Yahweh's direct address to Israel serves to confirm to Hosea's audience that as a consequence of her reliance on human kingship, her destruction is inevitable. The rhetorical question ('Who indeed will be your helper?' (v9b)) has as its inevitable answer: Nobody can help Israel. Verse 10 takes up the idea of v4 by the repetition of *יִשׁוּעַ* 'to save' in vv4, 10 ('There is no *saviour* except me' (v4); 'Where now is your king that he may *save* you in all your cities?' (v10a)). This twofold use of *יִשׁוּעַ* in vv4, 10 lays stress on the fact that Yahweh is the unique saviour of Israel; and that a human king can not save her. They should confess this in the penitential prayer in 14:4a ('Assyria will not *save* us'). In v10, the taunting question, with its twofold use of *מֶלֶךְ* 'king' serves to emphasise the foolishness of her resort to human kings, and their powerlessness in the midst of national crisis. In v11, the recurrence of *נָתַן* 'to give,' *מֶלֶךְ* 'king,' and *אֵף* 'anger' / *עֲבֵרָה* 'wrath' demonstrates Yahweh's deep anger at the profanity of her kingship institution; her preference for human kingship is incompatible with the theocracy of Yahweh. Through the history of Israel from the first king Saul to the last king Hoshea, her kings did what Yahweh considered evil. David was the only exception. The ultimate purpose of Yahweh's response to Israel's demanding a king is to instruct her that real salvation does not depend on her trust in a human king, but on her reliance on Yahweh.

### 13:12-13

12 **EPHRAIM's GUILT** is bound up,  
his **SIN** is stored away.  
13 The pangs of birth shall come for him,  
he is an unwise child.  
For in time  
he was not stationed  
at the opening of the womb.

צָרוֹר עוֹן אֶפְרַיִם  
צִפּוֹנָה חַטָּאתוֹ  
חֲבִלֵי יוֹלָדָה יִבְאוּ לוֹ  
בֶּן בִּן לֹא חָכֵם  
כִּי עַתָּה  
לֹא יַעֲמֹד  
בְּמִשְׁבֵּר בָּנִים



In vv12-13, attention turns to Ephraim's guilt. In v12, the repetition of the terms having similar meanings: צָרוּר 'bound up' / צְפוּנָה 'stored away' and עוֹן 'iniquity' / חַטָּאת 'sin' serves to make Ephraim certain of the fact that his guilt (idolatry in v2; human kingship in vv10-11) can not be denied, diminished, or removed from view, and that Yahweh's punishment is still impending. Verse 13 thus announces Yahweh's inevitable and violent punishment on Ephraim, who, since he does not recognise the proper time when he should be born (v13b), is compared to an unwise (לֹא חָכָם) child (v13a). As a child wrongly positioned for birth can die, and sometimes bring about his/her mother's death, so Ephraim, as an unwise child, cannot have hope for life; his destiny is death. As a result, Ephraim's rejection of the knowledge of God (cf. vv4-6) invites his death, as is revealed in the following v14.

### 13:14

14 Shall I ransom them from the hand of *Sheol*?  
 Shall I redeem them from *Death*?  
 Where are your plagues, O *Death*?  
 Where is your sting, O *Sheol*?  
 Compassion shall be hidden from my eyes.

מִיָּד שְׁאוֹל אֶפְדֶּם  
 מִמּוֹת אֲגַאֵלֵם  
 אֵיךְ דְּבָרֶיךָ מוֹת  
 אֵיךְ קִטְבְּךָ שְׁאוֹל  
 נַחֵם יִסְתֵּר מֵעֵינַי

Verse 14 switches to first person divine speech. In v14a, Yahweh asks himself whether or not he should redeem Ephraim. The verse reflects Yahweh's ambivalence between justice and compassion as in 6:4 and 11:8. However, for the following reasons it can be argued that Yahweh's decision is to punish Ephraim (*contra* A/F (639-640)):



1) The repetition of both שְׁאוֹל 'Sheol' and מוֹת 'Death' constitutes a chiastic structure:<sup>5</sup>

- (A) שְׁאוֹל (v14aα)
- (B) מוֹת (v14aβ)
- (B) מוֹת (v14bα)
- (A) שְׁאוֹל (v14bβ)

The placement of מוֹת at the centre of the structure emphasises the fact that Ephraim's guilt has death as its consequence, a fate which involves suffering pains, like those of Sheol.<sup>6</sup> מוֹת occurs five times in Hosea (2:5; 9:16; 13:1, 14 (x2)). The concentration of the term in 13:1-14:1, especially in 13:14, along with that verse's important placement in the chapter, highlights the unavoidable death penalty motif in 13:1-14:1.

2) Verse 14c ('compassion shall be hidden from my eyes') concludes Yahweh's decision to commence Ephraim's punishment immediately.

#### 13:15-14:1

15 Though he may flourish among BROTHERS,  
the east wind, the wind of YAHWEH, will come  
rising from the wilderness.  
His fountain will dry up,

כִּי הוּא בֶן אֲחִים יִפְרֵא  
יָבוֹא קְרִים רוּחַ יְהוָה  
מִמִּדְבָּר עֹלָה  
וַיִּבֶשׁ מְקוֹרוֹ

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<sup>5</sup> Chiasm is 'an inverted syntactic structure which occurs in parallel or linked phrases' (Lundbom (1975b:17)). It hence has the form of an ABB(')A('), or ABCB(')A('), or ABCC(')B(')A('), etc. Chiasm is regarded as 'the most integrating form of coordination in Hebrew' (A/F (191)). The rhetorical device serves 'to direct one's attention to an inversion of ideas taking place in a text, or even to a simple movement from one idea to another' (Polan (1986:62)). Two elements for chiasm are 1) key words; 2) speaker (Lundbom (1975b:61-62)).

<sup>6</sup> See, for example, Mays (1969:182); Wolff (1974:228); A/F (639); Hubbard (1989:222).

his spring will run dry.  
 He shall plunder the treasure  
 of all precious things.  
 1 Samaria shall suffer for her guilt,  
 for she has rebelled against her GOD.  
 They shall fall by the sword;  
 their infants shall be dashed in pieces,  
 their pregnant women shall be torn open.

ויחרב מעינו  
 הוא ישסה אוצר  
 כל בלי חמרה  
 תאשם שמרון  
 כי מרתה באלהיה  
 בחרב יפלו  
 עלליהם ירטשו  
 והריותיו יבקעו

In this passage, the approaching execution by the Assyrian army is vividly described. In 13:15, the repetition of הוּא 'he' occurred in vv1, 13 emphasises that in spite of his prosperity (vv1, 15), Yahweh's final judgment over him is nearing, a consequence of his foolishness (v13). As already announced in v14, his fate is to be death at the hands of the Assyrian troops, represented by 'the east wind' קָרִים occurring in Hosea only in the repetition 12:2; 13:15. The recurrence of קָרִים in 13:15 serves to stress Ephraim's foolishness and the corresponding punishment: his unwise deeds ('he pursues *the east wind* all day long' (12:2)) are consummated in his destruction by *the east wind*. The people and their land will be desolated by the hot wind from the wilderness drying up every fountain and spring, and by the Assyrian armies' plundering their treasure of all its precious things.

Three important terms occur in 14:1: שָׁמְרוֹן 'Samaria'; אָשָׁם 'to become guilty'; בָּקַע 'to tear open'. שָׁמְרוֹן matches אֶפְרַיִם 'Ephraim' in 13:1, 12 respectively, and, therefore, it forms an inclusion with the latter, suggesting that 13:12-14:1 constitutes a unit. The distant parallelism made by the repetition of אָשָׁם in 13:1; 14:1, and by the inclusion 'Ephraim' (13:1) and 'Samaria' (14:1) establishes 13:1-14:1 as a unit. The twofold use of בָּקַע, only in Hosea in 13:8; 14:1, serves to confirm Yahweh's violent punishment on Ephraim through the parallelism: אֶפְרַיִם (13:1) / בָּקַע (13:8) //



אִשָּׁם, שְׁמֵרוֹן (13:12) / בָּקַע (14:1). The repetition of the three terms אִשָּׁם, שְׁמֵרוֹן, and בָּקַע in 14:1 hence serves to confirm the fulfilment of the theme of 13:1-14:1: the guilt of Ephraim, especially of Samaria is to result in their violent punishment, since they rejected the knowledge of Yahweh (vv4-6), turning to Baal worship (vv1-3) and resorting to their human rulers (vv9-11).

Our discussion now turns to the unity of Hos 13:1-14:1.

### III.10.2 The Literary Unity of Hosea 13:1-14:1

While the small constituent literary units of Hos 12:1-15[11:12-12:14] are connected with each other mainly by the antithesis of the falsehood of Israel and the truthfulness of Yahweh, in Hos 13:1-14:1[13:16], we can see envelope patterns in a wide variety of forms not only in small literary units but also in large ones, constituting Hos 13:1-14:1 a literary unit. As for envelope patterns in Hosea and in the Bible, A/F (121), commenting on Hos 2:4-15[2-13], note as follows:

The envelope construction, in which terms and themes introduced in the opening lines of the unit (vv4-7) are then resumed or completed in the closing lines (vv14-15), is characteristic of literary style in the Bible, and is especially noteworthy in the Book of Hosea.

These phenomena can also be identified in diverse envelope structures in Hos 13:1-14:1 as follows:

I) Verses 1-8 can be divided into three literary units (vv1-3, 4-5, 6-8) by themes: both vv1-3 and vv6-8 describe Ephraim's iniquity and its consequent punishment, while in vv4-5, the faithfulness of Yahweh stands in contrast



to the guilt of Ephraim (cf. A/F 628). The two literary units (vv1-3, 6-8) form an envelope around the unit vv4-5:

(A) Ephraim's guilt and fate (vv1-3)

(B) Yahweh's truthfulness (vv4-5)

(A') Ephraim's guilt and its consequent punishment (vv6-8)

This envelope pattern which has Yahweh at its centre draws our attention to element (B), which focuses on Yahweh's truthfulness: he is the unique God and saviour of Ephraim from the Exodus and wilderness, so he requires that they know him alone. When Ephraim departs from the divine message of vv4-5, the resulting guilt and following punishment is described in both outer elements (A: vv1-3) and (A': vv6-8). The element of (A) is parallel to (A'): 1) The guilt (עֲשֹׂן) of Ephraim in v1 has its punishment completed with כָּקַע 'to tear' in v8; 2) הֵם 'they' in v3 appears again in v7; 3) The four occurrences of כִּי 'like' in v3 correspond to those in vv7-8; 4) The particle לָכֵן 'therefore' in v3 matches עַל כֵּן 'therefore' in v6. Thus these rhetorical devices all lay emphasis on Ephraim's impending destruction.

II) In 13:12-14:1, we can identify three constituent literary units by reference to the forms of the dominant pronouns: (A) 13:12-13 (the third person 'he'); (B) 13:14 (the first person 'I'); (A') 13:15-14:1 (the third person 'she'; 'they'), in which (A) is linked in envelope fashion with (A') around (B):

(A) the third person ('he') (13:12-13)

(B) the first person ('I') (13:14)

(A') the third person ('she'; 'they') (13:15-14:1)

The first person divine speech of the element (B) at the centre of the structure confirms for Hosea's audience that death will be their certain

doom as in v14. The element (A) is connected to (A'): 1) אפרים 'Ephraim' in v12 matches שמרון 'Samaria' in 14:1; 2) הוא 'he' in v13 occurs again in v15; 3) בוא 'to come' in v13 recurs in v15; 4) כי 'for' in v13 appears again in vv15; 14:1; 5) The unit 13:12-14:1 begins with אפרים in 13:12 and ends with בקע in 14:1, as in the unit vv1-8. All these parallels and the repetition of the terms in (A) and (A') give focus to the impending punishment of Ephraim, who is pictured as an unwise son.

III) Finally, in 13:1-14:1, we can identify three constituent literary units by the addressees: (A) vv1-8 ('Ephraim'); (B) vv9-11 ('Israel'); (A') vv12-14:1 ('Ephraim'), in which (A) and (A') form an envelope construction around (B):

- (A) Ephraim (vv1-8)
- (B) Israel (vv9-11)
- (A') Ephraim (vv12-14:1)

The element (B) 'Israel' at the centre of the structure serves to assure Hosea's audience that Yahweh is the only saviour of Israel, and that hence no human king can be such. As a result of depending on human rulers, Israel provoked Yahweh's rage, leading to her destruction. The two elements (A) and (A') are linked by the repetition of the following terms:

- \*1 אפרים 'Ephraim' (vv1, 12; 14:1 ('Samaria'))
- \*2 הוא 'he' (vv1, 13, 15 (x2))
- \*3 אשם 'to become guilty' (vv13:1; 14:1)
- \*4 מות 'to die' (vv1, 14 (x2))
- \*5 חטא 'to sin' (vv2, 12)
- \*6 יהוה 'Yahweh' (vv4, 15)
- \*7 אלהים 'God' (vv4 (x2); 14:1)
- \*8 בקע 'to tear open' (vv13:8; 14:1)

The repetition of all these terms together, serves to emphasise that as a

result of her rebellion against Yahweh, and the ensuing guilt, the death penalty of Ephraim is inevitable.

In summary. In the light of the structural analyses of 13:1-14:1, this large sub-section demonstrates the following small and large envelope construction, identifying Hos 13:1-14:1 as a literary unity:

(A) vv1-3		
(B) vv4-5 :	(X) vv1-8	
(A') vv6-8		
	(Y) vv9-11	
(C) vv12-13		
(D) v14 :	(X') vv12-14:1	
(C') vv15-14:1		

Our discussion now turns to the structural analysis of Hos 14:2-9.

### III.11 Structural Analysis of Hosea 14:2-9

#### III.11.1 The Analysis of Hosea 14:2-9

Hos 14:2-9 is divided into two constituent literary units (vv2-4; 5-9) by the speakers: in vv2-4, in his prophetic exhortation, Hosea suggests a form of penitential prayer to contemporary Israel (cf. as to the addressee of Hos 14:2-9, a detailed discussion will follow later); and אלהיך 'your God' in v2 and אלהינו 'Our God' in v4 form an inclusion, enclosing vv2-4, and so emphasising that the God for Israel is Yahweh (v2), and not idols (v4). In vv5-9, Yahweh's announcement of Israel's new existence in salvation is depicted as response to her repentant prayer.



**14:2-4**

2 *Return*, O **ISRAEL**,  
to **YAHWEH YOUR GOD**,  
for you have stumbled on your *GUILT*.  
3 *Take* words with you,  
*return* to **YAHWEH**;  
SAY to him,  
'TAKE AWAY all *GUILT*.  
*Take* what is good,  
that we may render the *fruit* of our lips.  
4 Assyria will *not* SAVE us;  
we will *not* ride on horses.  
We will *not* SAY *any more*, "Our *GOD*",  
to the *WORK* of our hands;  
for in you the orphan finds compassion'.

שׁוּבָה יִשְׂרָאֵל  
עַר יְהוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ  
כִּי כָשַׁלְתָּ בְּעוֹנְךָ  
קָחוּ עִמָּכֶם דְּבָרִים  
וּשְׁבוּ אֶל יְהוָה  
אָמְרוּ אֵלָיו  
כָּל תְּשָׁא עוֹן  
וְקַח טוֹב  
וְנִשְׁלַמְהָ פְּרִים שְׁפָתֵינוּ  
אֲשׁוּר לֹא יוֹשִׁיעֵנוּ  
עַל סוּס לֹא נִרְכָּב  
וְלֹא נֹאמַר עוֹב אֱלֹהֵינוּ  
לְמַעֲשֵׂה יָדֵינוּ  
אֲשֶׁר בְּךָ יִרְחַם יְתוֹם

In v2a, Hosea's prophetic exhortation to Israel begins with one of his key terms: שׁוּב 'to return', which occurs again in v3aβ. The repetition of the word at the beginning of his exhortation lays stress on Hosea's urgent call for Israel's repentance to Yahweh, in order that she may be saved from imminent destruction. Moreover, the root שׁוּב 'to turn' is repeated in vv5 (x2), 8 in the literary unit of Yahweh's response to her return (vv5-9). Thus, the fivefold use of שׁוּב in Hos 14:2-9 indicates that it serves as a key word, providing a leading motif within this large unit: Israel who turned away from Yahweh should return to her God to inherit future abundance.

The recurrence of the phrase יְהוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ 'Yahweh your God' in v2a, and of the divine names יְהוָה and אֱלֹהִים in vv2-4 all serves to emphasise that the only course for Israel's salvation is for her to return to Yahweh, her sole saviour, in repentance and obedience.

The repetition of עון 'guilt' in v2 ('for you have stumbled on your *guilt*') and in v3 ('Take away all *guilt*') serves to highlight the fact that the guilt of Israel is manifest as in 12:9; 13:12, so she should first of all confess her guilt to Yāhweh.

The twofold use of אמר 'to say' in vv3, 4 serves, with v3a ('Take words with you'), to stress that the only condition for Israel's return to Yāhweh is that she admit her guilt and repent to him. The repetition of אמר in the sincere sayings in vv3, 4 contrasts with the false speech of Israel in 12:9; 13:2, 10. This supports the case that Hos 12-14 is a literary unity.

In v3, we can see a parallelism in the repetition of the root לקח 'to take':

(v3aα)	קַח עִמָּכֶם דְּבָרִים
(v3cα)	וְקַח טוֹב

In the light of the parallel structure, טוֹב '(what is) good' may refer to good words<sup>1</sup> on the part of Ephraim. In this sense, the repetition of לקח serves to remind Israel of the need to take words of repentance on her return to Yāhweh.

In v4, in harmony with the three positive elements in v3b ('Take away all guilt. Accept what is good, that we may render the fruit of our lips.'),<sup>2</sup> the threefold use of לֹא 'not' in v4 emphasises Israel's strong vow of

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<sup>1</sup> Cf. for a discussion of טוֹב = 'word, speech', see Gordis (1955:89f.), who is followed by Wolff (1974:231) and Mays (1969:184); and similarly, A/F (645).

<sup>2</sup> Cf. A/F (645) point out that the prayer of Israel has seven speeches: three positive (v3b), three negative (v4a), and the conclusion (v4b).



renunciation (they would terminate their relationship with foreign powers and pagan gods), and hence their total surrender to Yahweh.

#### 14:5-9

5 I will heal their <i>turning</i> .	ארפא משובתם
I will love them freely.	אהבם נרבה
For my ANGER has <i>turned</i> from him.	כי שב אפי ממנו
6 I will be <i>like</i> the dew for <u>ISRAEL</u> ;	אהיה בטל לישראל
he will <i>flourish like</i> the lily.	יפרח כשושנה
He shall strike root <i>like Lebanon</i> .	ויך שרשיו בלבנון
7 His shoots shall spread out.	ילכו ינקותיו
His beauty shall be <i>like</i> the olive tree,	ויהי בזית הודו
his fragrance <i>like Lebanon</i> .	וריח לו בלבנון
8 They shall <i>return</i> and dwell in his shadow,	ישבו ישבו בצלו
they shall grow grain.	יחיו רגן
They shall <i>flourish like</i> the vine,	ויפרחו כגפן
his renown shall be <i>like</i> the wine of <i>Lebanon</i> .	זכרו כין לבנון
9 EPHRAIM,	אפרים
what has he to do with <u>IDOLS</u> <i>any more</i> ?	מה לו עוד לעצבים
It is I who have answered,	אני עניתי
and watched for him.	ואשורנו
I am <i>like</i> a luxuriant fir tree,	אני כברוש רענן
your <i>fruit</i> is found from me.	ממני פריב נמצא

Yahweh's response (vv5-9) to Israel's prayer (vv2-4) begins, as in vv2-4, with the repetition of the root שוב 'to turn' in v5a, c: משובתם '(I will heal) their apostasy' (v5a); and שב '(For my anger) has turned (from him)' (v5c). We can discern the word play in the fourfold repetition of the term שוב '(re)turn' (vv2, 3, 5 (x2)): if Israel *returns* to Yahweh (vv2, 3), Yahweh will *turn* his anger from them, and heal the illness of their apostasy: their *turning* away from Yahweh to idols (v5a, c).

In this connection, v5 forms an envelope construction by the repetition of the root שוב 'to (re)turn' with אהב 'to love':

- (A) ארפא משׁוּבַתָּם (v5a)  
 (B) אהבם נרבה (v5b)  
 (A') כי שׁב אפי' ממנו (v5c)

The important placement of אהב at the centre of the structure indicates for the following reasons that it serves as a key word of Hos 14:2-9:

- 1) The element (B) at the centre of the structure (v5b) serves to demonstrate that the free love of Yahweh rendered his anger over Israel ineffective (v5c), and directed him to heal their illness of apostasy so that they might have life (v5a).
- 2) As a result, vv6-9 following are replete with powerful images of the efficacy of Yahweh's love; similes of flourishing plant life. The image of Yahweh's love in vv6-9 reminds us of that in the Song of Songs.<sup>3</sup>
- 3) In the overall context of Hosea, אהב occurs nineteen times. The word appears only twice in Hos 12-14, in 12:8; 14:5. While אהב in 12:8 is used in a negative context ('Canaan, in his hands are false scales. He *loves* to oppress'), in 12-14, the only occurrence of אהב in the positive literary context of 14:5b ('I will *love* them freely') indicates an important aspect to Yahweh's love. Expression of this free love has been frustrated by the nature of Israel's apostasy against him. However, he can not restrain himself any longer, and his love flows out, directed at giving her new existence and prosperity.

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<sup>3</sup> Cf. Wolff (1974:234); Pope (1977).



In this regard, simile dominates, with the eightfold use of כ 'like' in vv6-9, laying stress on the enriching effect of Yahweh's free love for the repentant Israel's future life:

I will be *like* the dew for Israel;  
he will flourish *like* the lily.  
He shall strike root *like* Lebanon. (v6)

His beauty shall be *like* the olive tree,  
his fragrance *like* Lebanon. (v7bc)

They shall flourish *like* the vine,  
his renown shall be *like* the wine of Lebanon. (v8b)

I am *like* a luxuriant fir tree. (v9ba)

We can make the following observations on the repetition of כ 'like' in vv6-9:

1) The first occurrence of כ with the following טל 'dew' in v6aa ('I will be *like the dew* for Israel') contrasts to that in 6:4b ('Your love is *like the dew* that goes away early'), and in 13:3a ('Therefore they will be --- *like the dew* that goes away early'): in the context of salvation (14:2-9), Yahweh will be like dew for Israel's life and growth (14:6), while in that of judgment (13:3), as a punishment corresponding to her fleeting and dew-like loyalty (6:4), she will be diminished like dew (13:3). In a similar manner, the rest of the occurrences of כ in vv6-9 are in contrast to those in 13:3, 7, 8, in which כ is used to describe Israel's impending destruction.

2) The pairing of פרח 'to flourish' and לבנון 'Lebanon' in vv6, 8, and the term 'Lebanon' in v7 form an envelope pattern with twofold כ in vv6-8

respectively:

- (A) He will *flourish like* the lily  
He shall strike root *like Lebanon*. (v6bc)  
    (B) His beauty shall be *like* the olive tree  
        his fragrance *like Lebanon*. (v7bc)  
(A') They shall *flourish like* the vine,  
his renown shall be *like* the wine of *Lebanon*. (v8b)

The element (B) at the centre of the structure which combines beauty of appearance with that of fragrance, emphasises Israel's beauty with fragrance,<sup>4</sup> reinforced by the elements (A); (A') of Israel's luxuriant new life like that of Lebanon. The sixfold  $\beth$  with the construction in vv6-8 hence highlights the efficacy of Yahweh's love.

3) Finally, the remaining  $\beth$  in v9 ('I am *like* a luxuriant fir tree') concludes the statement of Yahweh's love as it is pictured in the simile of vv6-9, emphasising Yahweh's everlasting life for Israel. The simile of Yahweh like a tree is unique in the Old Testament.

In summary. In the light of the above analyses of the eightfold use of  $\beth$  in vv6-9, its usage of  $\beth$  may be outlined as follows: the occurrence of  $\beth$  in v6a serves to introduce the image of Yahweh's abundant love, which is highlighted in vv6b-8b, leading to the conclusion in v9. The rich similes in terms of flourishing agricultural produce combine to serve a double function: 1) to emphasise how abundant the acts of Yahweh's free love for the future life of Israel will be; 2) to reveal the foolishness of Israel, who

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<sup>4</sup> Cf. A/F (647) note a combination of 'fragrance' with 'beauty': 'his splendid fragrance'.



has turned to Baal for fertility in life, but suffered the infertility of death (13:1, 14).<sup>5</sup>

### III.11.2 The Literary Unity of Hosea 14:2-9

The two constituent literary units of Hos 14:2-4, and 14:5-9 are connected with each other for the following reasons:

1) As discussed above, in vv2-9, we can see a natural shift from the form of the people's penitential prayer (vv2-4) to Yahweh's response (vv5-9). 2) We can discern the use of the following important words in these two literary units vv2-4 and vv5-9:

שוב	'to (re)turn' (vv2, 3, 5 (x2), 8)
פרי	'fruit' (vv3, 9)
עוד	'any more' (vv4, 9)
מעשה ידי(נו)	'(our) handwork' (v4)
עצבים	'idols' (v9)
ישראל	'Israel' (v2)
אפרים	'Ephraim' (v9)

A) The twofold use of שוב 'to return' at the beginning of the prophetic exhortation for Israel to return to Yahweh (vv2, 3) heightens the sense of Hosea's earnestness and enthusiasm for the life of his people; there is no other way for them to be saved except by return to Yahweh. In the case of their acceptance of Hosea's invitation to return, in v5, Yahweh promises that he will heal their apostasy (משובתם literary their turn (to idols away) from (Yahweh)), since his anger over their destruction (13:11) has now

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<sup>5</sup> Cf. Labuschagne (1964:65-72).

turned from them to make room for his free love toward them. Indeed, Israel shall return to Yahweh (v8). The repetition of שׁוּב in vv2, 3, 5 (x2), 8 hence serves not only to connect vv2-4 to vv5-9 but also to demonstrate the way for Israel to recover a right relationship with Yahweh, and its consequences: Israel who turned to idols away from Yahweh should return in obedience. Then he will be ready to accept their return, and to offer free love to them.

B) The recurrence of פֶּרִי 'fruit' in v9bβ ('from me your *fruit* is found') lays stress on Yahweh's response to Israel's sincere prayer in v3bβ ('we may render the *fruit* of our lips'): he will accept their petition that he forgive their guilt, and their vow of repentance (v3), and in response to their return, will bestow on Ephraim a consistently productive life (v9). Ephraim is to find his fruit from Yahweh, since he himself promised to be like a luxuriant fir tree for them. Here, as noted earlier, the addressee 'Ephraim' (v9) for 'Israel' (vv2, 6) may be seen to enable a word play with פֶּרִי 'fruit' as in 9:16a: '*Ephraim* is stricken, their root is dried up, they shall bear no *fruit*'.

C-D) The use of the pair of עוֹר 'any more' and מַעֲשֵׂה יָדַי (נו) '(our) handwork', and of עוֹר 'any more' and עֲצֻבִים 'idols' in vv4b, 9a forms a parallel structure (A) (B) (A') (B'):

- (A) We will not say *any more*, 'Our God', (v4ba)
- (B) to the *work* of our hands (v4bβ)
- (A') Ephraim, what has he to do *any more* (v9aα)
- (B') with *idols* (v9aα)

The placement of the elements (B) and (B') at the centre of the structure emphasises that idolatry is a central failure. The elements (A) and (A')



hence describe the people's vow not to worship idols any more (A), and in response to their prayer, Yahweh's announcement of the final termination of their idolatry (A').

E) The use of 'Ephraim' (v9) for 'Israel' (v2) constitutes an inclusion, serving to frame Hos 14:2-9 as a literary unity. This use of 'Ephraim' (v9) for 'Israel' (v2) may, as noted above, be connected with a word play on פֶּרִי 'fruit' in v9. In connection with the inclusion by the use of 'Israel' and 'Ephraim' in vv2, 9, we can argue for the addressee in vv2-9 as being the Israel of Hosea rather than the future remnant in exile (*contra* Stuart (1987:212ff.)) on the following grounds:

1) Both v2 and v9a have, in their literary context, perfect tenses rather than imperfect ones: שׁוּבוּהָ יִשְׂרָאֵל עַד יְהוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ כִּי בַשָּׁלַח בַּעֲוֹנֶךָ 'Return, O Israel, to Yahweh your God, for you have stumbled on your guilt' (v2); אֲפִרִּים מִהָ לִּי עוֹר 'Ephraim, what has he to do with idols any more? It is I who have answered' (v9a). Verse 2 describes the guilt of Israel, especially that of her idolatry in the past, whilst in v9, Yahweh announces to the repentant Ephraim that their guilt will be forgiven. In both v2 and v9, Hosea thus addresses the Israel of his own time for the sake of their future life.

2) In connection with this, the repetition of עוֹר 'any more' in vv4, 9 points out that Israel who has served idols should, in her penitential prayer, vow not to have any more such relationships ('We will not say *any more*, "Our God", to the work of our hands' (v4b)). In response to Israel's repentant prayer, Yahweh declares that she no longer engages in idolatry (Ephraim,

what has he to do with idols *any more?* (v9a)). Similarly, Wolff (1974:234) notes: "What has Ephraim any more (7y) to do with idols", especially indicates with the word 7y that a turning point has been reached which puts the entire past into question'.

3) 'Ephraim' in v9a is regarded as 'Hosea's usual personal name for the contemporary northern kingdom. In the midst of Yahweh's promise the name is cried out to introduce a great exclamation that mingles protest and relief.'<sup>6</sup>

In short, the use of the five terms (A-E) above between vv2-4 and vv5-9 all serve to reinforce the fact that Yahweh is eager to respond to contemporary Israel's sincere prayer, linking vv2-4 to vv5-9.

In the light of this, we can comment on the view that repentance is not necessary for Yahweh's response in his act of salvation. For example, Emmerson (1984:49) supports this view, noting: 'The primary emphasis in vv5-8 lies not on the necessity for the nation to repent in order to elicit Yahweh's response, but on his sovereign freedom to act in salvation, consistently with his own nature, to effect a total reversal of an existing situation'. However, considering the structural analysis of 14:2-9 above, this seems a difficult position to maintain. Rather we can argue that Hosea consistently and earnestly exhorts the Israel of his time to return to Yahweh for their future life, since Yahweh is eager to accept their repentance and to promise them a prosperous future life. Eaton (1981:84-85) similarly notes:

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<sup>6</sup> Mays (1969:189).

The prophet issues a summons to repentance before turning again to God to voice the people's prayer and hope (Hos. 14.2/1) --- Hosea is then able to give Yahweh's rejoinder, a word of acceptance, promising healing and life in the rich language of nature growth and fertility, indeed with the tones of a love-song.

In Hosea, Yahweh's free love is effective upon Israel's return.

To sum up. Taking into account the shift from Israel (vv2-4) to Yahweh (vv5-9) as speaker, and the use of the terms above (שוב 'to return', פרי 'fruit', עוד 'any more', מעשה 'work', עצבים 'idols', ישראל 'Israel', and אפרים 'Ephraim') in vv2-9, Hos 14:2-9 can be claimed as a literary unity.

According to the above structural analyses of Hos 12-14, we were able to discern the following key words: מרמה 'falsehood' and שוב (hiph) 'to repay' in 12:1-15; אשם 'to become guilty', מות 'to die', ידע 'to know', and בקע 'to tear open' in 13:1-14:1; שוב (qal) 'to return', and אהב 'to love' in 14:2-9. Our next stage will be a study of these key words.



#### IV KEY WORDS OF HOSEA 12-14

The importance of key words<sup>1</sup> occurring in decisive positions within literary units has been emphasized by Muilenburg especially in his study of Second Isaiah (1956). In a later study, Muilenburg (1969:17; cf. III.4.1 above) notes the various functions of key words as follows: 'it is the key word which may often guide us in our isolation of a literary unit, which gives to it its unity and focus, which helps us to articulate the structure of the composition, and to discern the pattern or texture into which the words are woven'. These phenomena can also be noticed in the key words discerned above in Hos 12-14 (מרמה 'falsehood'; שוב (hiph) 'to return/repay'; אשם 'to become guilty'; מות 'to die'; ידע 'to know'; בקע 'to tear open'; שוב (qal) 'to return'; and אהב 'to love').

For the purpose of the present study, these key terms will be discussed in two parts: as they appear in Hos 1-11 and in 12-14; and then the relationship of the use of these key words in Hos 12-14 to that in 1-11 will be examined to discern how each word functions in Hosea as a whole. Our discussion of the words will proceed in the order of their appearance in Hos 12-14.

##### IV.1 מרמה

The term מרמה 'falsehood' occurs only twice in Hosea, in 12:1[11:12], 8[7]. However, it plays a significant role not only in its constituent literary

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<sup>1</sup> Cf. Watson (1984a:287-288) noted three different types of 'key word': 1. dominant word (e.g. 'cauldron' in Ez 24:3-13); 2. repeated word (e.g. 'voice' in Ps 29); 3. thematic word (e.g. 'to say, speak' in Ps 129).

context but also in Hosea as a whole:

### 12:1

Ephraim has surrounded me with deceit,  
and the house of Israel with falsehood (ובמרמה).  
Judah still wanders with El;  
and maintains faith with the holy ones.

This passage (12:1-2[11:12-12:1]) begins with Yahweh's complaint over Israel's deceit and falsehood, with which they surround him. The following v2 takes up the issue of the treachery of Israel by the term כִּזְב 'lies' in v2b, while v2a,c specify the character of her falsehood in her policy between Assyria and Egypt. Verse 2a portrays the deceptive pursuit of the east wind by Ephraim. The wind in itself is something deceptive (cf. 8:7); the east wind here represents Assyria from which Ephraim has sought her security. But it was illusory, since she was destroyed by the wind, the Assyrian army (cf. 13:15). In v2c, the pursuit of the wind is identified as the act of Ephraim's making covenant with Assyria and Egypt. The whole attitude of Ephraim demonstrates her falsehood against Yahweh, who has been faithful to her from the beginning of her history.

Hos 12:1-2 serves as the summary to the first section (4-11) of the second part (4-14) of the book, since in this section Hosea had consistently referred to the falsehood of Israel by the use of the corresponding terms: אֱלֵה '(false) swearing' (4:2; 10:4); כָּחַשׁ 'lying' (4:2; 7:3; 9:2; 10:13); כִּזְב 'lies' (7:13). In particular אֱלֵה and כָּחַשׁ in the positive indictment in 4:2 are, with the following elements (of the indictment) ('killing, stealing, murder'), employed in contrast to the phrases אֵין אֱמֶת 'no faithfulness', אֵין חֶסֶד 'no kindness',

and אין דעת אלהים 'no knowledge of God', in the negative indictment. In these thematic and verbal correlations, the use of מרמה in 12:1 in the summary accusation has a double function:

1) As in the occurrence of אלה '(false) swearing' and כחש 'lying' in the introduction to the second part of the book (4:2), so the appearance of מרמה with כחש in 12:1[11:12] and כזב in 12:2[1] in the beginning passage of 12-14, demonstrate that Israel's practice of falsehood is a primary feature of her apostasy, here specified as her false policy between Assyria and Egypt in 12:1-2.

2) The recurrence of מרמה only in Hosea in 12:8[7] serves not only to connect 12:1-2 to 12:3ff but also to anticipate a characteristic of the indictment of Israel in 12:3ff.

#### 12:8

Canaan, in his hand are false (מרמה) scales.  
He loves to oppress.

In Hos 12, Hosea accuses contemporary Israel of unfaithfulness through a review of the life of her ancestor Jacob. Verses 8-9 begins with the indictment of Ephraim through her commercial activities: Ephraim, like Canaan, collected wealth by the use of false scales (מאזני מרמה). The following statement of Ephraim in v9 rejects every criticism of her dishonest riches, as if wealth can be clear from all sorts of judgment. However, in the light of her own statement, Ephraim's wealth secured from 'false' scales is manifestly unjust. In spite of her denial of any injustice in



such deceitful riches, Hosea uses the statement for a polemic against the falsehood of Ephraim's involvement, mainly for the sake of material profit, in Canaanite culture and religion. In v15, the use of the term תַּמְרוּרִים 'bitterness' (assonant to מַרְמָה) with the term נָעַם 'to provoke' ('Ephraim has given *bitter* provocation') in the context of the religious failure of Ephraim in her idolatry<sup>2</sup> confirms that her guilty riches are a result of the ethical falsehood of a life of idolatry, causing the 'bitter' provocation of Yahweh.

In relation to this, it may be noted that Hos 12 is replete with the evidence of the falsehood of Ephraim: the terms used are נָחַשׁ 'deceit' (v1), מַרְמָה 'falsehood' (vv1, 8), כָּזַב 'lies' (v2), עָקַב 'to take, cheat' (v4), אֵוֶן '(excessive) wealth' and עוֹן 'guilt' (v9), עוֹן 'evil' and שׁוֹא 'worthlessness' (v12), and נָעַם 'provocation' and תַּמְרוּרִים 'bitterness' (v15). In this context, the repetition of מַרְמָה in 12:1, 8 is consistent: Hosea used the term to uncover the falsehood of Israel in reliance on foreign powers (12:1); in unjust profit (12:8); and in idolatry (12:12, 15). The falsehood of Israel in politics and religion had therefore been the two major causes of her destruction.

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<sup>2</sup> Cf. 12:12[11]; the term נָעַם is primarily used to describe worship of other gods; Stuart (1987:195-196).

## IV.2 שׁוּב

The root שׁוּב<sup>3</sup> 'to return' occurs twenty-three times in Hosea in various forms and senses. The verb שׁוּב appears twenty-one times, while the related noun מְשׁוּבָה<sup>4</sup> 'the act of turning away (in the sense of apostasy)' occurs twice (11:7; 14:5[4]). The use of the verb שׁוּב appears exclusively in the qal (x18) and hiph (x3).<sup>5</sup> The verb שׁוּב in the hiph is used to describe Yahweh's requitement of Israel's guilt, i.e. his turning Israel's guilt back on herself (4:9; 12:3, 15[2, 14]). In contrast, the verb in the qal is used in four broad contexts:

1. Israel's return to Yahweh (in the sense of repentance or conversion) (2:9[7]; 3:5; 5:4; 6:1; 7:10; 11:5; 12:7[6]; 14:2, 3[1, 2])
2. Israel's turning away from Yahweh (in the sense of apostasy) (7:16; 11:7; 14:5[4])
3. Yahweh's turning to Israel (to punish her) (2:11[9]; 4:9; 8:13; 9:3; 11:5; 12:3, 15[2, 14])
4. Yahweh's turning to Israel (in her favour) (5:15; 6:11; 14:5, 8[4, 7])

For the purpose of the present study, the root שׁוּב will be discussed in two parts: Hos 1-11 and 12-14, and then the relationship of the key word שׁוּב in the hiph (12:3, 15[2, 14]) and in the qal (14:2, 3, 5, 8 [1, 2, 4, 7]) to that in 1-11 will be examined to discern how it functions in Hosea as a whole.

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<sup>3</sup> For semantic discussions on the root שׁוּב, see Gordis (1933) and Holladay (1958).

<sup>4</sup> The noun form occurs twelve times in the Old Testament: nine times in Jeremiah (2:19; 3:6, 8, 11, 12, 22; 5:6; 8:5; 14:7), twice in Hosea, and once in Pr (1:32).

<sup>5</sup> Cf. in Amos, the root שׁוּב occurs fifteen times: six times in the qal (4:6, 8, 9, 10, 11; 9:14), and nine times in the hiph (1:3, 6, 8, 9, 11, 13; 2:1, 4, 6).

#### IV.2.1 שׁוּב in Hosea 1-11

##### IV.2.1.1 Israel's Return to Yahweh in the Sense of Repentance

###### 2:9

She shall pursue her lovers,  
but not overtake them;  
and she shall seek them,  
but shall not find (them).  
Then she shall say, 'I will go  
and return (וּאֶשׁוּבָה) to my first husband,  
for it was better for me then than now'.

Hos 2:4-17[2-15] constitutes a unit: the passage begins with Yahweh's lawsuit (רִיב) because of the unfaithfulness of his wife (Israel), which results in his chastisements, each introduced by 'therefore' (לִכֵּן in vv8, 11, 16); on the other hand, there is no indication of Yahweh's legal accusation in 2:1-3[1:10-2:1] and 2:18-25[16-23]: these two passages are oracles of eschatological salvation (cf. וְהָיָה בַּיּוֹם הַהוּא 'and it shall happen on that day' in vv18aα, 23aα; v20aβ).

Verse 9[7] begins with the description of the unfaithful woman who pursues her lovers, the Baals, and seeks them, ending in a fruitless effort, since they were no longer to be found. Thus, after great disappointment, she announces her return to her first husband, Yahweh. 'Then' (אָז) when 'it was better with me' refers to the early days of Israel's history, including the period in the wilderness. Hence, the intimate relationship between Yahweh and Israel is to be restored as it was in the beginning of her history. The intention of the chastisement from her first husband (Yahweh) upon the faithless wife (Israel) is, therefore, not to divorce her, but to reconcile her



through her return to him, acknowledging him as her first husband. In this case, her announcement of 'to return' to the first husband means to enter into her original relationship with him as in her early history, since in Hosea, the term signifies that Israel comes in true faith away from her lovers, the Baals in Canaan to Yahweh her God who revealed himself in the Exodus and wilderness (12:10[9]; 13:4).

### 3:5

Afterwards the children of Israel shall return (יָשׁוּבוּ) and seek Yahweh their God, and David their king; and they shall come trembling to Yahweh and to his goodness in the latter days.

Hos 3:1-5 reports Hosea's love for his adulterous wife in a manner of Yahweh's love for Israel. The narrative is composed of three elements: Yahweh's command (vv1a, 3), Hosea's execution of the command (v2), and Yahweh's interpretation of his command (vv1b, 4-5).

Verse 5 interprets the ultimate purpose of Yahweh's chastisement of Israel is not only punitive but also promising her repentance and restoration. 'Afterward' (אַחֲרָיִם) indicates Israel's turning point in recovering her lost relation with Yahweh, which is emphasised by the immediately following יָשׁוּבוּ 'they shall return'. Thus, the term שׁוּב means, as in 2:9[7] above, to turn to the original relation to Yahweh. When Israel shall return (יָשׁוּבוּ) to Yahweh, they will seek (וּבִקְשׁוּ) him in contrast to their previous seeking of lovers (2:9[7]) and Yahweh (5:6) in vain.

The verb יָשׁוּבוּ 'they shall return' in v5a may be used for a word play with יָשָׁבוּ 'they shall remain' in v4a. At the same time, these two finite verbs in

sequence **שוב** --- **ובקשו** may be rendered: 'they shall again seek,'<sup>6</sup> since the verb **שוב** can serve as an auxiliary when it is not followed by an adverb of place (cf. 5:4; 6:1; 7:10, etc.), but is immediately followed by another verb. In this case, the verb **שוב** can be used to signify to do something again (cf. 2:11[9]; 14:8[7]; Gen 26:18). In either rendering, the verb **שוב** is employed in the context of Israel's repentance to Yahweh in acknowledgement and obedience. The pairing of **שוב** and **בקש** is also found in Hos 5:15; 7:10. Israel's return to Yahweh, and her seeking him, initiated by his chastisement, is accomplished through her fearing him and obtaining his goodness (v5b), as in her early life with him.

#### 5:4

Their deeds do not permit them  
to return (**לשוב**) to their God.  
For the spirit of harlotry is in their midst,  
and they do not know Yahweh.

Hos 5:1-7 is a literary unit, which contains Yahweh's accusation of Israel's playing the harlot, with the consequent judgment of her. In v4, Israel's deeds (**מעלליהם**), which always refers to the evil deeds of their past in the land, both cultic and social, here specifies the spirit of harlotry, stemming from Baal worship. Their deeds do not allow them to know Yahweh and to return to him: the idea of their return to Yahweh, whom they no longer know, had already disappeared from minds filled with playing the harlot. So, Yahweh is to chastise them in order that they may recover their original relationship with him by their return (cf. 3:5). Verse 4 thus demonstrates

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<sup>6</sup> Cf. NEB; NJB.

that Israel's playing harlot in the fertility cult is a radically sinful deed, preventing them from knowing Yahweh and returning to their right relationship with him.

6:1

Come, let us return (וּנְשׁוּבָה) to Yahweh;  
for he has torn, but he will heal us;  
he has stricken, but he will bind up our wounds.

Hos 6:1-3 is, in the context of the Syro-Ephraimite war, a song of penitence presented by Hosea on behalf of Israel for their salvation from the national crisis. The song is composed of two cohortative invitations to the people (וּנְשׁוּבָה אֵל יְהוָה 'let us return to Yahweh' (v1a); וְנִרְעָה וְנִרְדָּפָה לִרְעֹת אֵת יְהוָה 'let us know, let us press on to know Yahweh' (v3a)), alternating with assertions of confidence that Yahweh is faithful to heal and bind up wounded people (vv1b-2, 3b).

In v1a, the cohortative form of the verb (וּנְשׁוּבָה 'let us return'), immediately following the imperative לָבוּ 'come' denoting 'exclamation'<sup>7</sup> lays stress on the urgent aspect: the song exhorts enthusiastically the contemporary Israel of Hosea to return to Yahweh. Here it takes up Hosea's key words שׁוּב and יָרַע (cf. 5:4) to summon Israel to return to Yahweh and to acknowledge his lordship: not only to rescue her from national disaster but also to recover the original relationship with Yahweh of the Exodus and wilderness period, in contrast to their current Baal worship.

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<sup>7</sup> Cf. A/F (418).



In relation to this, Hosea may have used the song as polemic against Baal religion, since in the song, the statements of 'after two days', 'on the third day' (v2), and of weather, rain, and season (v3) may reflect the activities of a cycle by the Baals of Canaan.<sup>8</sup> However, Israel is still involved in the fertility cult as is shown by Yahweh's lament over her disloyalty in repenting only in a shallow manner (vv4-6). In the context of syncretism, mixing Yahwism with Baalism, Hosea's concepts of 'to return' to Yahweh and 'to know' him have become alien to the people, since in Hosea, 'to return' means to turn to Yahweh of the Exodus away from Baal, and 'to know' signifies the acknowledgement of his lordship over her in true faith.

## 7:10

The pride of Israel witnesses against him;  
but they do not return (וָשׁוּ) to Yahweh their God,  
nor seek him in all this.

Hos 7:8-12 describes Yahweh's lament over Israel's foolishness in international power politics (vv8-11), following Yahweh's announcement of punishment (v12).

Verse 10 begins with the previous saying in 5:5a ('The pride of Israel witnesses against him'). As in 5:3-7, which describes how the people's actions of playing harlot do not allow them to return to Yahweh their God, here too the pride of Israel, stemming from their arrogant rebellion against Yahweh rather than trust in him, prevents return to Yahweh: they do not seek him in spite of the serious deprivation of their position among the

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<sup>8</sup> Cf. Wolff (1974:118-119); Mays (1969:94-96).

alien nations (vv8, 9). The succession of 'return --- and seek' (שוב, בקש) with 'Yahweh their God' (יהוה אלהיהם) is also used in 3:5. Therefore, in the latter days Yahweh himself is to bring about Israel's return to him by his chastisements (cf. 9:9a). The measures relating to the eschatological future reflect Hosea's consistent theme of Israel's return to Yahweh; the restoration of her original relation to him as in the days of the Exodus and wilderness.

### 11:5

He shall return<sup>9</sup> to the land of Egypt,  
and Assyria shall be his king,  
because they have refused to return (לשוב).

After the description of Yahweh's calling Israel, using the images of Yahweh's fatherly care and love for his son, and of Israel's rebellion in their past history (vv1-4), vv5-7 depict Yahweh's immediate punishment of contemporary Israel for continual apostasy, in the manner of their ancestors.

In v5aα, 'He shall return to Egypt' signifies the approaching punishment of Israel, and refers either to the last king Hoshea's dependence upon Egypt to avoid Assyrian domination after Tiglath-pileser III's death (2 Kgs 17:4), or to the exiles who had already fled to Egypt during the attack by Tiglath-pileser III in 733 B.C., which is presupposed in 11:11. In either case, Israel should return to the land of Egypt, the land of servitude, from which Yahweh

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<sup>9</sup> Reading לו 'to him' following the LXX (αὐτῷ) instead of MT אל 'not' before שוב 'he shall return' early in v5. 'He shall not return to Egypt' in the MT does not correspond to Hosea's threat of Israel's flight to Egypt (cf. 7:16; 8:13; 9:3, 6; 11:11). With the LXX, we should read לו 'to him' as the final word of v4, in place of MT's אל 'not' as the first of v5.

brought them up. Verse 5aß ('and Assyria shall be his king') specifies Assyria as the nation who will destroy Israel and his kingship, and then will rule over him as his real king. Verse 5b ('because they have refused to return') describes how all these punishments occurred as a result of the stupid stubbornness of their refusal to return to Yahweh. In Egypt, bondage and death are their inevitable destiny. The refusal of their return to Yahweh is the fundamental rebellion against him.

#### IV.2.1.2 Israel's Turning Away from Yahweh in the Sense of Apostasy

##### 7:16

They turn (יָשׁוּבוּ) to not-High;  
they are like a slack bow,  
their princes shall fall by the sword  
because of the insolence of their tongue.  
This shall be their derision in the land of Egypt.

Hos 7:13-16 expresses Yahweh's lament over Israel's doom on account of her rebellion. This passage begins with Yahweh's cry of woe (וָאֵן) to Israel, accuses her of rebellion against him (vv13-16a), and concludes with his announcement of punishment (v16bc).

In v16, Israel's turn to the not-High (לֹא־עַל) from Yahweh refers to her movement toward the god for grain and wine in the time of drought (v14).



In this context, 'not-High' may refer to Baal of fertility.<sup>10</sup> Israel's direction facing towards Baal, implies her cultic apostasy in Baal worship, and the evil which she devises against Yahweh her God (v15b). In v16b, Hosea compares Israel to 'a treacherous bow', which is wrongly made, so it can not be used for shooting (cf. Ps 78:57). Thus, the 'treacherous bow' signifies its ineffectiveness. Just like the bow, Israel is to expose her frailty to the nations (vv8, 9, 11, 16). The last two lines depict Yahweh's announcement of the punishment which shall fall on her princes by means of the sword because of the insolence of her tongue against Yahweh and his words. As a result, Israel's turning to not-High and the death of her leaders will be met with derision in the land of Egypt, from whom she will have sought help to save her from catastrophe.

### 11:7

My people are bent on turning away from me (למשׁובתי);  
and God,<sup>11</sup> though they call on him, shall not raise them up.

Hos 11:5-7 mentions Yahweh's threat to Israel's apostasy and ingratitude in the face of his fatherly love and care for her (vv1-4).

Verse 7a expresses Yahweh's agony over Israel through a summary of her long history of stubbornness and rebellion against him. משׁובה means literally 'turning away from', and in Hosea it is used to describe Israel's

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<sup>10</sup> Cf. for example, BHS; RSV suggest לבעל 'to Baal' for על לא in the MT.

<sup>11</sup> The meaning and syntax of the MT in v7ba (literally 'and to על they call him') is awkward. I revocalize לא 'to' in the MT as לא 'God' following the LXX (καὶ ὁ θεός); cf. Syr (לא-לא) in the critical notes of BHK; A/F (587).

apostasy towards Baal (v2). Following their apostasy, v7b announces Yahweh's wrath and punishment on them: though they call on him, God will no longer raise them up from their disaster, since their calling is not sincere (cf. 7:14a; 8:2), and they may even have expected a rescue from Baal in the light of their persistent calling on him (v2) and of their long apostasy (v7a).

In short, vv5-7 demonstrates that the term **שוב** conveys a central motif of Hosea: their apostasy (**משובה**) (v7) came from their refusal to 'return' to Yahweh (v5b); so Yahweh's corresponding punishment of Israel is threaten their 'return' to Egypt.

#### IV.2.1.3 Yahweh's Turning to Israel to Punish Her

##### 2:11

Therefore, I will take again (**אשוב ולקחתי**)  
my grain in its time,  
and my wine in its season;  
and I will take away my wool and my flax,  
which were to cover her nakedness.

Hos 2:11-15[9-13] is Yahweh's second judgment sentence introduced by **לכן** 'therefore' at the very beginning of v11[9], in the various forms of deprivations.

Verse 11 states that what the woman once abundantly possessed, she will be deprived of: Yahweh will take again (**אשוב ולקחתי**) his grain and wine, since she did not recognize that he was the owner of the produce (v10[8]); Yahweh will take away (**והצלתי**) his wool and flax, since she went after her lovers, the Baals, thinking that they gave these resources to her (v7[5]). The



sequence of *my* grain --- *my* wine --- *my* wool and *my* flax has a double purpose: 1) Yahweh is the source of the natural produce, and 2) it is used for a polemic against Israel's Baal worship for resources. In this context, שׁוּב is employed to mean the movement of return to an original condition: in v9[7], she hoped to return to her first husband (Yahweh), but did not come to him. So, in v11[9], he decided to take again, or alternatively to return and take (שׁוּב וּלְקַח) his gifts to her, since she did not recognize who the originator of the natural resources was. In this sense, שׁוּב וּלְקַח 'to take again' in v11[9] denotes Yahweh's deprivation of her in order to lead her to acknowledge that the source of the produce is Yahweh, not Baal.

#### 4:9

Then it shall be like the people, like the priest;  
I will punish him for his ways,  
and return (שׁוּב) to him his deeds.

Hos 4:4-10 is a unit: the passage depicts Yahweh's accusation against the priesthood, since their rejection of the knowledge of God caused the people's want of the knowledge, resulting in their destruction (vv1, 6); in contrast, vv1-3 mentions the accusation against the whole land of Israel, while vv11-14 expresses the guilt of Israel's cultic life.

Verse 9a is an epigram whose meaning in itself is not clear. However, in the light of the previous context of vv1, 4-6, it expresses that the priests will suffer the same punishment as the rest of the nation (cf. vv5-6 mentions that priest, prophet, and people will be destroyed all together). Verse 9b corresponds similarly with 12:3 ('to punish Jacob according to his ways; according to his deeds he will repay him'). The latter verse is used to



introduce Yahweh's dispute (רִיב) against Jacob to reveal the guilt of the Isráel contemporary to Hosea. Likewise, in v9b, Yahweh announces to the priest that he will judge and punish (פָּקַד) the course of his way (דָּרֶךְ) and bring back (אָשִׁיב) upon him the consequences of his deeds. Verse 9b consists of chiastic parallelism:

(A) פָּקַדְתִּי עָלָיו  
           (B) דָּרָכָיו  
           (B') מַעֲלָלָיו  
 (A') אָשִׁיב לוֹ

The placement of 'his ways' (B) and 'his deeds' (B') at the centre of the structure lays stress on the liability of Israel to Yahweh's punishment. On the other hand, the use of the hiph אָשִׁיב 'I will return' in parallel with פָּקַדְתִּי 'I will punish'<sup>1</sup> serves to stress the principle of the justice of Yahweh, who, as the executor of punishment, permits the priests' evil deeds to return to them, like an act that recoils upon the agent.

### 8:13

They offer sacrifice;  
 they eat flesh  
 but Yahweh does not accept them.  
 Now he will remember their guilt,  
 and punish their sins;  
 they shall return (יָשׁוּבוּ) to Egypt.

Hos 8:11-13 gives an account of Yahweh's lament over Israel's corrupt cult in the context of the Syro-Ephraimite war. Verse 13 concludes Yahweh's indictment of Israel's altar and sacrifice: v13a mentions Yahweh's rejection

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<sup>1</sup> Cf. the use of the pair in Am 1-2 (1:3, 6, 9, 11, 13; 2:1, 4, 6); A/F (362).

of Israel's diligent effort in offering sacrifice to renew the relationship with him. As a result, in v13b $\alpha$ , עתה 'now' (cf. 2:12[10]; 4:16; 5:7) introduces Yahweh's verdict which is delineated fully in the synonymous parallelism:

He will remember (זכר) their guilt (עון)  
He will punish (פקר) their sins (חטאת)

The form of Yahweh's punishment is also used in 9:9b. Yahweh was not able to be pleased with the corrupt sacrifice, with their iniquity and sins. After the general description of Yahweh's punishment, v13b $\beta$  speaks of the punishment concretely: 'They shall return (ישׁוּבוּ) to Egypt'. The use of the clause as a formula of the punishment is manifest in 9:3b $\alpha$  and 11:5a $\alpha$ . 'Egypt' is used thirteen times in Hosea, in which five times it is employed to describe the beginning of Yahweh's saving history (2:17[15]; 11:1; 12:10, 14[9, 13]; 13:4). Thus, the punishment of Israel's flight to Egypt as refugees (cf. Dt 17:16; 28:68) signifies that the salvation history is reversed. Israel will again be in bondage in Egypt, as they were at their beginning. The punishment reflects the context in which Hosea had applied for help from Egypt (2 Kgs 17:4), to which Israel is to return. In this connection, the ironical fate of Israel's return to Egypt in v13 may have been deliberately described in a term corresponding to the term used in the hiph in 4:9, in which the pair פקר and שׁוּב are also employed as in 8:13b.

### 9:3

They shall not dwell in Yahweh's land;  
but Ephraim shall return (ושׁב) to Egypt,  
and in Assyria they shall eat unclean food.

In Hos 9:1-9, in the context of Israel's harvest festival, Hosea demands that

her joyful and arrogant celebration, immediately proceeding Yahweh's punishment (vv2-9), is to be brought to an end because of her apostasy (v1).

Verse 3 threatens that Israel will be expelled from Yahweh's land. The use of the term 'the land of Yahweh' (אֶרֶץ יְהוָה) occurs only here in the Old Testament (cf. 'my land' in Jer 2:7; 16:18), and is parallel to 'the house of Yahweh' (8:1; 9:15; cf. 9:8). The term signifies that the land of Canaan is Yahweh's personal property, and that Israel is settled there as a tenant. Hosea used the term for a polemic against Canaanite religion in which Israel regarded Baal as the owner of the land and also as the producer of natural things. In this context, Hosea declares Yahweh, not Baal, possesses the land, as in 'the land is mine' (לִי הָאֶרֶץ) in Lev 25:23 (cf. Josh 22:19). Yahweh, the owner of the promised land, is, therefore, entitled to remove his corrupt people from his land. Verse 3b thus specifies the consequent punishment of the people in the synonymous parallelism of the often used pair of 'Egypt' and 'Assyria' (7:11; 8:9; 11:5, 11; 12:2[1]): some of them should 'return' to Egypt, whilst others will eat unclean food in Assyria.

In short, as in the case of 8:13 above, שׁוּב in v3 serves to lay emphasis on Yahweh's corresponding punishment: the history of Israel is to be brought back to the original point before she met him. So, Yahweh's gifts of the Exodus and the land for Israel are to be withdrawn.

#### 11:5

He shall return (שׁוּב) to the land of Egypt,  
and Assyria shall be his king,  
because they have refused to return.



As discussed in 8:13; 9:3 above, the repetition of the term (שוב) at the very beginning and end of 11:5, by using its two rather different meanings, signifies that Yahweh's punishment of Israel (her fate of the 'return' to Egypt) corresponds to her guilt (her refusal to 'return' to Yahweh). The theme is consistent in Hosea: Israel who do not 'return' to Yahweh (cf. 2:9[7]; 3:5; 6:1; 7:10; 11:5; 14:2[1]) should 'return' to Egypt (cf. 7:16; 8:13; 9:6; 11:5, 11).

#### IV.2.1.4 Yahweh's Turning to Israel in Her Favour

##### 5:15

I will return again (שוב) to my place,  
until they suffer for their guilt<sup>2</sup> and seek my face,  
and in their distress they seek me.

Hos 5:12-14 depicts, in the situation of the Syro-Ephraimite war, the punishment of Israel and Judah by Yahweh, who is pictured metaphorically as a moth, dry rot, and a lion. In v15, however, the destructive image of Yahweh shifts to that of Yahweh who withdraws himself and waits for his people's seeking him, with their acknowledgement of their guilt.

In the Old Testament, the concept of the absence of God is characteristic of Israel's lament. In particular, the people in distress desire to seek Yahweh so that they may be free from trouble. However, sometimes one can not gain access to Yahweh, since he has withdrawn. So, even if Israel and Judah tried to seek Yahweh with their flocks and herds, they did not find him, since

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<sup>2</sup> On this rendering, see IV.3.1.5:15 below.

they thought of Yahweh as Baal who is allured by sacrifices (cf. 5:6). Yahweh is the God who is not pleased to see the sacrifices without one's loyalty to him (cf. 6:6; 8:13).

On the other hand, v15 states that in their distress the people acknowledge their guilt and seek (בקש) Yahweh's face and him diligently (cf. the piel imperf. of שׁוּר 'to seek', which is parallel to בקש), until when he will withdraw and wait. In response to v15, the song of penitence (6:1-3) invites their true repentance to Yahweh. So, verse 15 serves as transition from Yahweh's punishment of Israel and Judah in vv12-14, to the song.<sup>3</sup> The intention and effect of the announcement of Yahweh's withdrawal from chastisement of the people is not to destroy them completely, but to invite them to a sincere penitence, and then to lead them to the place where they are truly to return to him. Similarly, Mays (1969:92) states that 'what the announcement of Yahweh's withdrawal does in effect is to interpret Yahweh's wrath in such a way that the experience of punishment becomes an invitation to penitence'. In this context, שׁוּב in v15a ('I will return again (אשוב) to my place') is used to denote Yahweh's favour: his withdrawal himself from the people, hoping for their repentance. Hosea does not specify where Yahweh himself dwells; מְקוֹם may refer either to a lair, continuing the lion imagery in v14<sup>4</sup>, or to Yahweh's (heavenly) dwelling place, for מְקוֹם often corresponds to מִקְדָּשׁ 'holy place or abode, sanctuary'.<sup>5</sup> By his love, Yahweh withdrew his wrath on the people, from whom he also hid himself, and waited for their return to him in repentance and obedience.

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<sup>3</sup> So Mays (1969:92); Stuart (1987:106).

<sup>4</sup> Cf. Wolff (1974:116); A/F (415).

<sup>5</sup> Cf. Is 26:21; Mi 1:3; 1Kg 8:30 = 2Ch 6:21.



6:11

Judah too, a harvest is appointed for you.  
When I restore (בְּשׁוּבִי) the fortunes of my people.

Hos 6:10-7:2 mentions Yahweh's agony over the guilt of his people, following his desire to restore them (6:11b-7:1a). Verse 11a seems to be a gloss,<sup>6</sup> since the line disturbs the sequence of the thought in vv6:10-7:2 due mainly to the ambiguity of the meaning of the term קָצִיר 'harvest'. In the Old Testament, the word is used to denote positive connotations (Dt 30:9) or negative ones (Am 8:2; Joel 4:13[3:13]). The term here is employed to signify Yahweh's judgment,<sup>7</sup> since instead of an adversative particle, the use of וְ in the opening וְיָהוָה 'Judah too' (cf. 5:5b) indicates that v11a is connected with the previous v10. In this sense, v11a appears to have to be considered as a Judean redactor's expansion, a warning to Judah, after the catastrophe of the northern kingdom. Thus, v11 should be redivided to take v11b with 7:1.<sup>8</sup>

Verse 11b describes Yahweh's longing for the restoration of his people in spite of their deep corruptness (v10). שְׁבוּת from שָׁבָה normally means 'captivity', but שְׁבוּת (itself from שׁוּב) along with שׁוּב (lit. 'to turn the turning') is used to mean 'to restore the fortune'. The fact that the infinitive construction of בְּשׁוּבִי שְׁבוּת (v11b) is parallel to that of כִּרְפְּאִי לְיִשְׂרָאֵל 'when I would heal Israel' (7:1a) indicates that both sayings are

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<sup>6</sup> So Mays (1969:102); Buss (1969:15); and Wolff (1974:106; 123); for a detailed discussion on this issue, see Emmerson (1984:86-87).

<sup>7</sup> So Emmerson (1984:86); *contra* Stuart (1987:112).

<sup>8</sup> For example, RSV, NAB, and NEB.



consistent in their meaning: Yahweh's restoration of his people's fortune specifies his healing wounded body of his people (cf. 5:13; 6:1; 11:3). The term נָפַק 'to heal' is also used for the healing of Israel's apostasy (14:5[4]). In this sense, Yahweh's restoring the fortune of his people denotes salvation not only from their physical illness but also their spiritual corruption: the restoration of the wholeness of his people, i.e., *restitutio in integrum*.

In short, in the background of the Syro-Ephraimite war which brought about serious disaster in both Ephraim and Judah, the use of the term שׁוּב in v11b (שְׁבוּת 'the restoration of the fortune') lays emphasis on Yahweh's unfailing favour for his people, although the negative note of the people's defilement suggests that such a hope is not likely to be realized (7:1b).

#### IV.2.2 שׁוּב in Hosea 12-14

##### IV.2.2.1 Israel's Return to Yahweh in the Sense of Repentance

###### 12:7

So you, by the help of your God, should return (תָּשׁוּב);  
keep love and justice, wait for your God continually.

Hos 12:6-7[5-6] begins with a doxology to Yahweh as the almighty God manifested in the title of 'the God of Hosts', and to his 'memorial' (זִכָּר; cf. Ex 15:3; Pss 102:13[12]; 135:13), which is effective throughout the generations by its use. Verse 6 thus provides the stage for Hosea's exhortation of the Israel contemporary to him to return to Yahweh from their apostasy, by the help of their God, as their ancestor Jacob returned

from his deceit to his God (cf. v5[4]b; Gen 28:15, 21). And then they should keep love (אהבה) (cf. 2:21[19]; 4:1; 6:4, 6; 10:12) and justice (משפט) (cf. 2:21; 5:1, 11; 6:5; 10:4), waiting for their God continually, since Yahweh has already lamented over their fleeting love to him (cf. 6:4-6). Moreover, the use of the pair אהבה and משפט in the context of Yahweh's restoration of the future Israel in 2:21 ('And I will betroth you to me for ever; I will betroth you to me in righteousness and in *justice*, in *love*, and in mercy') demonstrates how Yahweh has lamented deeply over Israel's failure of the return to him, keeping love and justice, and at the same time, he has enthusiastically desired their return to him.

#### 14:2

Return (שובה), O Israel, to Yahweh your God,  
for you have stumbled on your guilt.

In his prophetic exhortation in Hos 14:2-4[1-3], Hosea invites the present Israel to return to Yahweh her God. The opening command, 'Return' (שובה),<sup>9</sup> in the singular is addressed to the nation as a whole as if they are a single individual. The fact that 'Yahweh your God' (יהוה אלהיך) occurs only in 12:10[9]; 13:4; 14:2[1] in Hosea specifies again whom it is Hosea urges his people to return to. They should return to Yahweh, their God of the Exodus and wilderness. Yahweh is the God who, through their return to him in the sense of repentance, would like to recover their original relationship with him, and so, restore their knowledge, love, and loyalty to him alone as they had had in their early life with him. Because of the iniquity of their

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<sup>9</sup> For the use of the emphatic imperative, see Davidson (1966:94).

trusting in foreign powers and idols (v4[3]), Hosea's command to them to return to him is, accordingly, to be the last gospel for the stumbling Israel. Thus, the use of **שוב** at the very beginning of the exhortation emphasises that the apostate Israel's return to Yahweh is the final hope of salvation, and that, although the catastrophe has already begun, he persistently desires a new beginning by her return. The disaster's origins lie not in him, but in her iniquity.

#### 14:3

Take words with you,  
return (**ושובו**) to Yahweh;  
say to him,  
'Take away all guilt.  
Take what is good, that we may render  
the fruit of our lips'.

Verse 3[2]α specifies how Israel is to respond to the invitation to return to Yahwe : 'Take words with you' (**קחו עמכם דברים**). The only thing which they should bring with them when they return to him is words of a petition for his forgiveness, and a vow expressing their repentance, since the sole appropriate offerings acceptable to him are words, rather than sacrifice without loyalty (cf. 4:8; 5:6; 6:6; 8:13). In this context, **שוב** in v3aβ serves a dual function: 1) Yahweh's desire for Israel's return to him, since the term is parallel to that in v2α, and its repetition lays emphasis on this longing; 2) Israel's true repentance to Yahweh, since the command 'Take words with you' followed by 'Return to Yahweh' lays stress on sincere penitence on the part of Israel when she returns to him.



#### IV.2.2.2 Israel's Turning Away from Yahweh in the Sense of Apostasy

##### 14:5

I will heal their turning (משׁוּבָתָם),  
I will love them freely.  
For my anger has turned from him.

In v5, Yahweh makes sure, in the context of his promise of Israel's restoration (vv5-9) in response to their penitential prayer (vv3-4), that he as a physician will heal the repentant Israel's illness, which is their apostasy (משׁוּבָתָם): since Israel in the past has continually rebelled against Yahweh (cf. 5:4; 7:2, 16; 11:5, 7). 'Their apostasy' (משׁוּבָתָם) means literally 'their turning away from (Yahweh)' (cf. 11:7). Thus, to heal their apostasy is to heal their sickness in obstinately failing to return to Yahweh. This will lead them to turn to him, and away from their idolatry. 'I will love them freely' in v5a $\beta$  expresses the promise that Yahweh will heal the illness of the repentant Israel by his free love, as he did in the wilderness (11:1, 3). In v5b, Yahweh's wrath, once executed to Israel's destruction (cf. 8:5; 13:11), is now quenched by his love to heal their apostasy. As a result, the following verses 6-9 portray the effect of Yahweh's healing in terms of abundant plant life. Therefore, the use of שׁוּב in the form of מְשׁוּבָה at the very beginning of the turning point from Israel's penitential prayer to Yahweh's response to it emphasises that to heal their 'apostasy' (משׁוּבָתָם), their turning

away from Yahweh, is the first step to entry into a future prosperous life.<sup>10</sup>

#### IV.2.2.3 Yahweh's Return to Israel to Punish Her

##### 12:3

Yahweh has a dispute with Israel,  
to punish Jacob according to his ways;  
according to his deeds he will repay (יָשִׁיב) him.

Hos 12:3 begins with Yahweh's dispute (רִיב) with Israel, leading us to the court scene, in which Yahweh as prosecutor, judge, and plaintiff summons Israel as defendant. Verse 3b is composed of chiastic parallelism: 'to punish Jacob' (A); 'according to his ways' (B); 'according to his deeds' (B'); 'he will repay him' (A'). Here Hosea reviews, through this structure, the career of Israel's ancestor, Jacob (AB), in order to reveal the character of the present Israel (A'B'). As discussed in 4:9b above, the form of 12:3b corresponds almost literally with 4:9b ('I will punish them for their ways, and repay them for their deeds'). The original purpose of both lawsuits is that the priests will receive Yahweh's appropriate punishment for their ways and deeds (4:9b), whilst the Israel contemporary to Hosea will deserve Yahweh's punishment according to their ways and deeds (12:3b). Thus, the use of יָשִׁיב in 12:3b, as in 4:9b, serves to emphasise that Yahweh's punishment corresponds to Israel's ways and deeds.

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<sup>10</sup> On the balancing 'אֵן אֶשׁ 'my anger has turned' in v5b, see below.

## 12:15

Ephraim has given bitter provocation.  
He will leave his bloodguilt on him.  
His Lord will return (יָשִׁיב) to him his reproach.

Hos 12:15[14] serves as a conclusion to Yahweh's lawsuit (רִיב) in v3[2]. Verse 15a summarizes the guilt of Ephraim. As noted above, the hiph of נָעַם 'to provoke' is used in the Old Testament most often to describe Yahweh's anger over Israel's worship of other gods (cf. v12[11]; Dt 32:16, 21); and תַּמְרוּרִים 'bitterness' echoes with מִרְמָה 'falsehood' in v8[7]. So, Israel's idolatry and falsehood are the major sins contributing to Yahweh's 'bitter provocation'. In v15bα, 'bloodguilt' (דָּם) (cf. Lev 20), characterised as Israel's bitter provocation of Yahweh, is a great perversion; hence the punishment is so severe: it deserves the sentence of death. The announcement of the punishment: 'he will leave his bloodguilt on him' thus signifies how serious the corruptness of Israel is, and at the same time, how strict Yahweh's punishment of the guilt is. Finally, 'his Lord will return to him (יָשִׁיב לוֹ) his reproach' in v15bβ picks up 'he will repay him' (יָשִׁיב לוֹ) in v3bβ, and concludes the lawsuit of Yahweh as the lord of Israel, by turning his full reproach on Israel, emphasising his lordship and sovereignty over her, since he is Yahweh her God (vv7, 10). The hiph of שָׁב in v15bβ thus serves to confirm the certainty of Yahweh's impending punishment which refers back to v3b.

### IV.2.2.4 Yahweh's Return to Israel in Her Favour

## 14:5

I will heal their turning, I will love them freely.  
For my anger has turned (שָׁב) from him.



In the Old Testament, אַף 'anger' is used to indicate the approach of Yahweh, revealing Israel's guilt and the corresponding punishment (cf. Dt 29:19-27). In Hosea, the term describes the punishment of Israel's iniquity by her destruction (cf. 8:5; 11:9; 13:11). Therefore, the statement 'my anger has turned from him' means that Yahweh's punishment of Israel is not effective any more, since now his wrath gives place to his free love, which heals her apostasy. As a result, Israel will remain in Yahweh's merciful forgiveness as she did in her early history. So, Yahweh's anger turned away from Israel is to be regarded as a sign of the restoration of his favour for her. In this context, the use of בָּשׂוּ in v5c lays stress on Yahweh's compassionate favour by which the punishment of Israel is to cease for ever.

#### 14:8

They shall return (בָּשׂוּ) and dwell in his shadow,  
they shall grow grain.  
They shall flourish like the vine,  
his renown shall be like the wine of Lebanon.

Hos 14:5-9[4-8] expresses Yahweh's promise of Israel's restoration in response to her penitential prayer (vv2-4[1-3]). In v8aα, בָּשׂוּ 'they shall return' may also mean 'again', treating it as an auxiliary; since, as noted on 3:5 above, it is immediately followed by the finitive verb בָּשׂוּ 'they shall dwell'.<sup>1</sup> Thus בָּשׂוּ בָּשׂוּ may be rendered: 'they shall again dwell'. Upon their return to dwell in their shadow, Israel, as a flourishing plant, will again enjoy abundant produce from Yahweh (v8aβ-b). The use of בָּשׂוּ in v8aα hence emphasises that their return to Yahweh ultimately originates in his

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<sup>1</sup> For this rendering, see II.4.14:8 above.

favouring a life of future prosperity for them.

#### IV.2.3 The Relationship of the Use of שׁוּב in 12-14 to that in 1-11

It now remains to examine the connection between the uses of the key word שׁוּב (hiph 'to return/repay' in 12:3, 15[2, 14]; qal 'to return' in 14:2, 3, 5, 8[1, 2, 4, 7]) and the corresponding usage in 1-11, to discern how this key word functions in Hosea as a whole.

In the Old Testament, שׁוּב is basically used to express a return to Yahweh to whom Israel has been unfaithful. In Hosea, the term is employed to denote the unfaithful Israel's turning away to the Canaanite fertility religion, and then her return to Yahweh, the God of the Exodus and wilderness, in her faithfulness and obedience to him. In connection with this, the use of שׁוּב fifteen times in Hos 1-11 may be summarized as follows:

1) The apostasy of Israel consists in her turning away to Baal, and failure to return to Yahweh (7:16; 11:7). 2) So, Hosea exhorts Israel to return to Yahweh, in the sense of repentance, but she was not able to follow this advice as a result of her continual involvement in Baal worship (2:9[7]; 3:5; 5:4; 6:1; 7:10; 11:5). 3) Yahweh is thus to execute his chastisement or punishment of Israel in order that she may return to him (2:11[9]; 4:9; 8:13; 9:3; 11:5). 4) In the sequence of the events above, Yahweh still shows his enduring willingness for her return, by the withdrawal of the punishment (5:15), and the effort to restore her fortune (6:11).

The motifs of שׁוּב in Hos 1-11 are consistent with the usage in Hos 12-14,



in which the root שׁוּב occurs three times in Hos 12: vv3, 7, 15[2, 6, 14], and five times in Hos 14: vv2, 3, 5 (x2), 8[1, 2, 4, 7].

On the one hand, the placement of the key word שׁוּב in the hiph form: שׁוּב 'to return/repay' in 12:3, 15[2, 14] is significant: in Hos 1-11, Hosea has persistently (x15) exhorted contemporary Israel to return to Yahweh, by the various use of the root שׁוּב. Despite Hosea's enduring efforts for his people's return to Yahweh, they have continued in their idolatry. So, at the beginning of the second section (Hos 12-14) of the second part (Hos 4-14) of the book, Hosea picks up the words לוּ שׁוּב from 4:9b ('I will punish him for his ways, and *return to him* his deeds') to introduce Yahweh's inevitable punishment of the stubborn Israel of his times. Both 12:3b and 4:9b correspond to each other literally and are used in the context of Yahweh's dispute (רִיב) with Israel. The recurrence of the words לוּ שׁוּב in 12:15b<sup>β</sup> confirms the certainty of the punishment of Israel, completing the sub-section of Hos 12. In this context, Hosea prefers to use the term twice, at the beginning and end of the sub-section, since the twofold use of the term in the hiph should help to move the people to return to Yahweh, to avoid the approaching punishment.

On the other hand, after the want of the term in Hos 13:1-14:1, the use of the key word שׁוּב in the qal five times in Hos 14:2-9[1-8] conveys other important meanings. At the very beginning of the prophetic exhortation, the repetition of שׁוּב in vv2-3a lays stress on how urgent and vital is Israel's return to Yahweh in repentance and obedience. Moreover, the repetition of the root שׁוּב twice at the very beginning of Yahweh's response (to heal their apostasy (מִשׁוּבָתָם), and to turn (שׁוּב) Yahweh's anger from them in



v5[4]) to her penitential prayer may be regarded as an echo corresponding to the repetition of שׁוּב in vv2, 3. The final use of שׁוּב (שׁוּבוּ 'they shall return') in Hosea, in v8a emphasises Yahweh's special favour for Israel, since, by their return to him, their abundant future life from him is waiting for them.

To sum up. As a result of Israel's continual guilt in turning away from Yahweh, and in continuing with Baal worship, Yahweh's announcement of the punishment by the repetition of שׁוּב in the hiph (12:3, 15[2, 14]) was her inevitable fate. However, Yahweh, the God of Israel, facing the approaching punishment, her catastrophe, was not able to endure her entire destruction. The free love of Yahweh desires Israel's urgent and earnest return to him (vv2, 3), since on her return, Yahweh will heal her illness, apostasy, turning his anger from her (5); as a result, in future, Israel will enjoy abundant life from Yahweh.

After the absence of the term שׁוּב in 13:1-14:1[13:16], its appearance five times in the final sub-section lays emphasis on Yahweh's love, and enthusiasm for Israel's return to him: a desire to enter into their original relationship as in the days of the Exodus and wilderness. For this purpose, Hosea may have used the key word שׁוּב, with another two key terms (עָרַב, אָהַב), to lead his people to understand the perversity of their relationship to Yahweh, and then to restore their right relationship, as in their early history. Hosea's favourite use of שׁוּב may explain why in particular the

Deuteronomist and Jeremiah<sup>2</sup> have employed the term so prominently. To return to Yahweh is not only demand but also gospel<sup>3</sup> forever.

#### IV.3 חָשַׁן

The root חָשַׁן 'to become guilty' occurs five times in Hosea, all in the qal in 4:15; 5:15; 10:2; 13:1; 14:1[13:16]. For the aim of the present study, the term will be discussed in Hos 1-11; 12-14; and then the connection between the key word in 13:1; 14:1 and that in 1-11 will be examined to discern how the word functions in Hosea as a whole.

##### IV.3.1 חָשַׁן in Hosea 1-11

#### 4:15

Though you play the harlot, O Israel,  
let not Judah become guilty (חָשַׁן').  
Do not go to Gilgal.  
Do not go up to Beth-aven.  
Do not swear, 'As Yahweh lives'.

Hos 4:15-19 threatens the destruction of Israel as a result of the harlotry of her false cult. In v15, Hosea exhorts Judah, by a fourfold imperative expressed by לֹא 'not' plus the imperfect, not to share in the false cult practised at the two principal shrines of the northern kingdom: Gilgal and Beth-aven (an insulting nickname for 'Bethel'; cf. Am 5:5, in which '(Beth-)aven' is used to scorn Bethel), since the worship in the shrines had

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<sup>2</sup> Cf. Holladay (1958:7).

<sup>3</sup> Cf. the parable of 'a prodigal son' in Luke 15:11-32.

become a source of Baalism. In delivering his message to the audience of Israel, Hosea's summons for Judah (cf. 5:5, 10, 13f.; 6:4) to refrain from going to Gilgal and Bethel, the favorite sanctuaries of the northern kingdom, ironically condemns Israel's corrupt cult, in order that she, along with Judah, may cease to go there.

The first imperative of Hosea for Judah is **אַל יִהְיֶה אִשָּׁם יְהוּדָה** 'Let not Judah become guilty'. In Hosea, the use of **אִשָּׁם** has a double purpose: 1) it describes guilt in relation to God, especially in cultic matters: Israel's involvement in the cult of Baal; 2) as a consequence, it emphasises a threat of punishment. The first meaning is appropriate in the context of 4:15. Therefore, the subsequent three prohibitions (v15b) signify the practices which would incur such guilt: to go to Gilgal and Bethel, and to swear the traditional oath 'as Yahweh lives' at these false sanctuaries (cf. 4:2; 10:4; Ex 20:7; Dt 5:11). The term **אִשָּׁם** in 4:15 is hence used to warn Judah against sharing in the guilt of Israel's corrupt cult of Baal, in order that Judah may escape the coming punishment.

### 5:15

I will return again to my place,  
until they suffer for their guilt (**אִשָּׁמוּ**)<sup>4</sup>  
and seek my face,  
and in their distress they seek me.

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<sup>4</sup> Cf. LXX (**αφανισθῶσι**) 'they are devastated' might have read **אִשָּׁמוּ** or **אִשָּׁמוּ** from **אִשָּׁם**; K/T note the LXX is an etymological exegesis of **אִשָּׁם**, as in 10:2; 14:1[13:16]. Rather the LXX may have read the same Hebrew as retained in the MT, and interpreted it theologically, since as noted in 4:15 above, in Hosea **אִשָּׁם** means either 'to become guilty' or 'to become punishable' as a consequence of guilt. In the light of the context, the latter meaning is appropriate in 5:15; see the discussion on 5:15.



Hos 5:15a states, against the background of the Syro-Ephraimite war, Yahweh's favour for his people: he will withdraw himself from Israel and Judah, expecting their return to him. Verse 15b,c expresses the temporal (cf. עַד 'until') purpose of Yahweh's chastisements: they will suffer for their guilt (יָשָׁמוּ) in fulfilment of v9a ('Ephraim shall become a desolation in the day of punishment'). They should hence experience disaster as payment for their guilt, since, through the punishment, Yahweh is capable of curing their sickness and wound, which Assyria and Egypt are unable to do (v13). In their calamity they will be able to discover their guilt; in their great affliction they will seek Yahweh eagerly and return to him.

In short, the use of עָשָׂה in 5:15 emphasises Hosea's consistent teaching that Yahweh is the God who chastises the guilt of their idolatry so that they may acknowledge it and return to him in repentance and obedience.

#### 10:2

Their heart is false;  
 now they must suffer for their guilt (יָשָׁמוּ).<sup>5</sup>  
 He himself will break down their altars,  
 and destroy their pillars.

Hos 10:1-8 describes the judgment of Yahweh on the two important institutions of Israel: cult (vv1-2; 5-8) and kingship (vv3-4).

Verses 1-2 mentions the judgment of Yahweh against Israel's abundant cultic equipment: v1 portrays that Israel in Canaan has prospered like a luxuriant

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<sup>5</sup> Cf. LXX (αφανισθῶσονται); see the note on 5:15 above.

vine, so producing much fruit. The prosperity has, however, led to her destruction, since she thought of the abundance, in connection with the fertility rites, in terms of the increase and improvement of cultic sanctuaries: altars and pillars, which had thus been misused for the ends of prosperity. In response to their cultic life, Hosea declares 'their heart is false' (v2aα): they had worshipped Yahweh, but they had not sought him with all their heart (cf. 7:14; Dt 6:5; 1 Kgs 8:61; 2 Kgs 20:3), since what they had really desired was the abundant produce of the land. So, in fact their heart was on Baal, the god of fertility, rather than on Yahweh.

As a consequence of the guilt of their false cult, הנה 'now' in v2aβ, as in 2:12[10]; 5:7; 8:10, 13, introduces the threat of Yahweh in v2b: 'now they should suffer for their guilt (מִשְׁנֵאִי)': Yahweh himself will destroy the altars and pillars in order that they may acknowledge the guilt of their false religion and heart, and thus be able to seek him wholly. So, the employment of מִשְׁנֵאִי in 10:2 serves, as in 5:15, to stress that Yahweh's punishment is a consequence of the apostate cultic life of Israel.

#### IV.3.2 מִשְׁנֵאִי in Hosea 12-14

##### 13:1

When Ephraim spoke, there was trembling;  
he was exalted in Israel.  
But he became guilty (מִשְׁנֵאִי) through Baal and died.

In the circumstance of the approaching end of the northern kingdom, Yahweh's accusation begins with a review of Israel's history: v1a states the superiority of Ephraim in all of Israel. In spite of his preeminence,

however, Yahweh pronounces in v1b Ephraim's guilt through Baal as leading to death. From the very beginning of her history, Yahweh had had a unique relationship with Ephraim, and so required Ephraim to know and worship him exclusively. Since she came into the land of Canaan, however, Ephraim had continually worshipped Baal of the fertility cult (cf. 9:10; 11:2): Ephraim had contaminated the cult of Yahweh, which was to invite the destruction of the death penalty.

In short, as discussed in 4:15 above, the use of  $\text{בשן}$  in 13:1b also lays emphasis on the cultic guilt of Ephraim's idolatry. In particular, 13:1b makes it manifest that Baal worship is the source of the guilt and death of Ephraim.

#### 14:1

Samaria shall suffer for her guilt ( $\text{בשן}$ ),<sup>1</sup>  
because she has rebelled against her God.  
They shall fall by the sword;  
their infants shall be dashed in pieces,  
their pregnant women shall be torn open.

In Hos 13:5-14:1, near to the end of the northern kingdom, Hosea threatens approaching desolation by the east wind, a metaphor for Assyria (13:15). Verse 14:1a ( $\text{שָׁמָרָא תִּשָּׁפֵן}$  (which may be assonant) 'Samaria shall suffer for her guilt') brings into focus the punishment of Samaria, the capital city, within the nation as a whole; v14:1a specifies the reason for her punishment: rebellion against her God. Hosea had continually condemned the guilt of Samaria, guilt both in terms of idolatry and kingship (7:1; 8:5-6;

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<sup>1</sup> For the LXX ( $\alpha\varphi\alpha\nu\iota\sigma\theta\eta\sigma\epsilon\iota\tau\alpha\iota$ ), see the note on 5:15 above.



10:5-7). The rest of the verse threatens the punishment itself as being in the manner of a cruel military attack. The misery of the city is described; the awful slaughter of infants and pregnant women by the sword. The recurrence of **אָשָׁם** in 14:1 serves, as in 5:15; 10:2, to emphasise that the punishment is for Samaria's guilt as the centre of the nation's rebellion against her God; leading the nation to idolatry as in the wilderness, and to foolhardy and dangerous politics in both national and international affairs.

#### IV.3.3 The Relationship of the Use of **אָשָׁם** in 12-14 to that in Hosea 1-11

We turn now to the connection between the key word **אָשָׁם** in 13:1; 14:1[13:16] and in 1-11, in order to examine the function of the word in Hosea as a whole.

In Hosea, the term **אָשָׁם** primarily emphasises the guilt of Israel's cultic life of Baal worship, meaning either 'to become guilty' or 'to become punishable for the guilt'. In the light of the discussion above, Hosea used both meanings: the first meaning is appropriate in 4:15; 13:1, whilst the second one corresponds to the usage in 5:15; 10:2; 14:1[13:16].

The repetition of **אָשָׁם** in 13:1, 14:1[13:16] is particularly significant: after the absence of the term in Hos 11-12, its recurrence twice in 13:1-14:1 constitutes that as a unit, serving a double purpose: 1) The main source of the guilt of Ephraim is her Baal cult (13:1). 2) As a result or response, Yahweh is to punish the guilt, focusing on Samaria, as the capital city may be responsible for the apostasy of the people as a whole. Because of this guilt, the nation faces doom as its inevitable fate (14:1).

In short, the fivefold use of **מָוֶן** in Hosea in 4:15; 5:15; 10:2; 13:1; 14:1[13:16] serves to stress Israel's guilt deriving from her worship of idols, with decline and fall as its inexorable consequence.

#### IV.4 מוֹת

The root מוֹת 'to die' appears five times in Hosea in 2:5[3]; 9:16; 13:1, 14 (x2). The former two cases (2:5; 9:16) occur in the hiph ('to cause to die': 'to kill, slay'), whilst the latter three instances are used in the qal ('to die' in 13:1), and in the noun form (מָוֶת 'death' in 13:4 (x2)). For the purpose of the present study, each term will be discussed in Hos 1-11; 12-14, and then the connection between the term in both parts will be examined to discern the function of the key word in 13:1, 14 in Hosea as a whole.

##### IV.4.1 מוֹת in Hosea 1-11

##### 2:5

Lest I will strip her naked,  
and make her as on the day of her birth.  
I will make her like the wilderness.  
I will make her like an arid land,  
and slay her (וְהִמָּתִיהָ) with thirst.

Hos 2:4-17[2-15] constitutes a unit, in which Yahweh accuses his wife (Israel) of her unfaithfulness, preceding his chastisements of her.

This passage begins with Yahweh's lawsuit (רִיב) against his unfaithful wife (v4[2]a): he warns her to remove the signs of her adultery (v4b). Verse 5[3]

mentions Yahweh's first chastisement of Israel: if she does not remove the signs of unfaithfulness from her face and breasts, he will in turn remove her clothing, food and water; as a result, she will be stripped naked in shame (cf. v12[10]; Ezek 16:1-5) and will die of thirst. It is the legal responsibility of a husband to provide clothing and food for his wife (Ex 21:10). Her unfaithfulness, however, broke the marital relationship, so he is free from the duty. In v5b, the wife now represents the land; her children its inhabitants, the offspring of the marriage between the land and the god of heaven. Hosea used the imagery, with its background in Canaanite cult, for a polemic against the Canaanite faith in Baal, whom Israel regarded as the god of weather, rain, season's changing, and fertility: since the source of the fertility of the land is Yahweh, not (the rain of) Baal, Israel, the inhabitant of the land, is to have an intimate relationship with Yahweh. If Israel regards Baal as the originator of the fertility, and follows that god continually, the result will be only desolation, drought, and *death* (v3[1]b).

## 9:16

Ephraim is stricken,  
their root is dried up,  
they will yield no fruit.  
Even if they give birth,  
I will slay (והמתי) the darlings of their womb.

Hos 9:10-17 states a historical retrospective on Israel's past idolatry at Baal-peor (v10) and Gilgal (v15) to reveal the corresponding guilt of present Israel.

After Yahweh's indictment of Israel's evil at Gilgal (v15), in v16, Hosea announces Yahweh's punishment of Ephraim's barrenness in the image of a



withering plant: Ephraim whose root has dried up, has already been stricken (cf. הִכָּה, the hoph perfect of נָכָה 'to strike'; and שָׁבַשׁ 'to dry up'). As a result, all future fruitfulness of Ephraim is to be ineffective: 'they shall bear no fruit'. Here the word play on אֶפְרַיִם - פֶּרִי ('Ephraim' - 'fruit') can be noted, as implied also in Gen 41:52 ('The name of the second he called *Ephraim*, "For God has made me *fruitful* in the land of my affliction"). Thus, Ephraim, once a 'fruitful' land, will become completely 'fruitless'. Verse 16b specifies the deprivation of children in vv11-14: even if Ephraim bear children, Yahweh will 'slay' their beloved children. וְהָמַתִּי 'I will slay' here emphasises the severity of Yahweh's punishment of bereavement: it is Yahweh himself who will kill the precious offspring of their fertility.

In short, the use of מוֹת in 9:16 is, as in 2:5[3], to emphasise that Yahweh's punishment of Ephraim's idolatry is to be barrenness, impotence, and infertility, despite their having worshipped Baal as the god of fertility. The fruit of Ephraim is to stem from Yahweh, not Baal (cf. 14:9[8]bβ: 'Your fruit is found from me').

#### IV.4.2 מוֹת in Hosea 12-14

##### 13:1

When Ephraim spoke, there was trembling;  
he was exalted in Israel.  
But he became guilty through Baal and died (וַיָּמָת).

Hos 13:1-3, with the approaching end of the history of Israel as background, begins with Yahweh's indictment of guilt against Ephraim's Baal and idolatry, and ends with his verdict on this worship.

In spite of Ephraim's prosperity in Israel (v1a), in v1b $\alpha$ , Yahweh perceives the guilt of Ephraim in his worship of Baal; in v1b $\beta$ , Yahweh specifies the appropriate punishment: death. Here Hosea for the first time connects Ephraim's Baal worship directly with the death penalty: the idolatry of the fertility cult which had characterised Ephraim's faith resulted in the greater infertility of death. מָוֹת 'and he died' signifies that as a consequence of his idolatry he received the death sentence, as his apostasy led to many deaths at Baal-peor (Num 25). In fact, after the attack on the northern kingdom by Tiglath-pileser III in 733 B.C., the nation had become severely reduced, not only in territory and population but also in spiritual strength (cf. 5:11; 7:9; 8:8; 2Kgs 15:29). They had already been approaching death's power as punishment, in the context of the final years as a helpless nation.

### 13:14

Shall I ransom them from the hand of Sheol?  
 Shall I redeem them from Death (מָוֹת)?  
 Where are your plagues, O Death (מָוֹת)?  
 Where is your sting, O Sheol?  
 Compassion shall be hidden from my eyes.

The questions in v14ab might be treated as words of salvation (promise): v14ab implies that Yahweh is the sole saviour of Israel (13:4), since he alone can ransom (פָּדָה) and redeem (גָּאֹל) her from Sheol and death, as he did in the time of Exodus. Yahweh can exercise his power over the plagues of death and the sting of Sheol: the two are his instruments (cf. Dt 32:24; Ps 91:6; Hab 3:5); the pair, death and Sheol, personified in the metaphor of poetry (cf. Is 5:14; 28:15, 18; Ps 49:14f.; Pr 1:12) may reflect the Canaanite thought and mythology in which Mot (Death), the god of Sheol, reigns in the



underworld. But Yahweh is the living God who never dies, and who conquers death (cf. Hos 2:1[1:10]; Hab 1:12). Thus, Hosea may have used the pair of Sheol and death for a polemic against the Baal cult.

However, the questions in v14ab are to be treated in the light of v14c ('Compassion shall be hidden from my eyes') and of the context of the impending judgment of Israel as a consequence of her idolatrous Baal cult in Hos 13:1 ('But he became guilty through Baal and died'). In this sense, the questions in v14ab are to be employed as Yahweh's summons for the powers of Sheol and death to commence to overtake the life of Israel: since 1) in v14ab, the chiastic form of Sheol (A); Death (B); Death (B); Sheol (A) demonstrates the severity of death in Sheol; 2) in v14c, Yahweh refuses to execute his compassion (חַסֵּד), a hapax legomenon, in the development of the judgment, although Yahweh's sympathy may work on another occasions (cf. 11:8: 'My heart recoils within me, my compassion (חַסֵּד) grows warm and tender').

In short, the repetition of מוֹת with שְׁאוֹל in v14 lays stress on the fact that because of the Baal cult the punishment of death is Israel's unavoidable destiny, fulfilling v1.

#### IV.4.3 The Relationship of the Use of מוֹת in 12-14 to that in 1-11

We now proceed to the discussion of the connection between the key word מוֹת in Hos 13:1, 14 and that in Hos 1-11 to examine the function of the term in Hosea as a whole.



The root מוּם occurring twice in Hos 1-11 in 2:5[3]; 9:16 refers, in the context of the punishment of Israel's Baal cult, to death by thirst (2:5[3]), and the bereavement of their dear children (9:16) respectively. Hos 13 is full of the theme of threat of death (13:1, 7-9, 14 (x2); 14:1). In this connection, the repetition of the term three times in Hos 12-14, in 13:1, 14 (x2) alone, in the circumstance of the impending punishment of Israel, serves to establish a relationship between the evil deeds of Israel and their consequences: the Baal worship of Israel (vv1-3) led to her death as punishment (vv7-9; 14:1[13:16]). Thus, after the absence of the term in Hos 10-12, its occurrence three times emphasising the death penalty in 13:1-14:1, in the context of Yahweh's approaching punishment of Israel, directs her to return to him. They are to turn from Baal in order that they may escape the impending punishment: although they had worshipped Baal, in expectation of a prosperous life, this had had to end in destruction and death. The source of vegetation, growth, and fruit is Yahweh.

#### IV.5 יָדָע

The root יָדָע 'to know' occurs nineteen times in Hosea: the verbal form יָדָע appears fourteen times,<sup>2</sup> whilst the nominal form יְדָעָה 'knowledge' occurs five times.<sup>3</sup> The use of the term in Hosea can be grouped as follows:<sup>4</sup>

1) Israel's ignorance of Yahweh (4:1, 6 (x2); 5:4; 6:3 (x2); 8:2)

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<sup>2</sup> 2:10, 22[8, 20]; 5:3, 4, 9; 6:3; 7:9 (x2); 8:2, 4; 9:7; 11:3; 13:4; 14:10[9].

<sup>3</sup> 4:1, 6 (x2); 6:3, 6.

<sup>4</sup> Cf. Stuart (1987:16).

- 2) Israel's ignorance (2:10[8]; 7:9 (x2); 11:3)
- 3) Israel's future knowledge of Yahweh (2:22[20])
- 4) Israel's proper knowledge of Yahweh (5:9; 6:6; 9:7; 13:4; 14:10[9])
- 5) Yahweh's knowledge of Israel (5:3; 8:4)

For the purpose of the present study, we will discuss the above items in two parts: in both Hos 1-11 and 12-14 to consider the relationship of the term in both parts and then to discern how the key word **יָדָע** in Hos 13:4 functions in Hosea as a whole. The term in Hos 14:10 will be discussed later (separately from Hos 12-14), since the verse serves as the conclusion to the whole book of Hosea.

#### IV.5.1 יָדָע in Hosea 1-11

##### IV.5.1.1 Israel's Ignorance of Yahweh

##### 4:1

Hear the word of Yahweh, O Israelites;  
for Yahweh has a dispute with the inhabitants of the land:  
There is no faithfulness, no love, and no knowledge of God  
(**רַעַת אֱלֹהִים**) in the land.

Hos 4:1-3 is generally known as the introduction to the second part (Hos 4:1-14:9) of the book of Hosea. In v1 Hosea exhorts Israel to hear the word of Yahweh (v1a), since Yahweh as the plaintiff against Israel the defendant has a controversy (**רִיב**) with the people (v1b). The guilt of the accused consists of three deficiencies (faithfulness, kindness, and knowledge of God) (v1c) followed by six specific sins (swearing, lying, killing, stealing, committing adultery, and murder) (v2). Yahweh as the judge of Israel, therefore (**עַל כֵּן**), announces his punishment over Israel (v3). Hos 4:1-3

hence anticipates how the following passages 4:4-14:1[13:16] will be developed: they are replete with Yahweh's accusation and judgment over against Israel's iniquity.

In this significant position in Hosea, רעת אלהים 'knowledge of God' plays an important role: in the placement at the end of the first series (v1c), the phrase רעת אלהים serves to summarize the previous two sins (v1c) and denote the following six specific ones (v2).

The term ידע 'to know' has a wide range of meaning<sup>1</sup>: know, perceive, understand, recognize, acknowledge, observe, discriminate, realize, notice, consider, find out, learn, care about, be concerned about, be acquainted with, have intercourse with, have insight, and select or choose. Here it means in part to recognize or acknowledge the existence and authority of God and hence the ways and will of God, since ידע partially derives from the terminology of Near Eastern treaties. There it is a technical term to represent the mutual legal recognition of the binding relationship between sovereign and vassal, especially the recognition of the sovereign on the part of the vassal and thus the loyalty of vassal to sovereign.<sup>2</sup> The phrase אין רעת אלהים 'no knowledge or recognition of God' at the significant position of Hos 4:1 hence serves to identify an important theme in Hosea: Israel's lack of knowledge or recognition of God has led her to contempt for God's will; and as a consequence her disloyalty to God ended in her destruction.

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<sup>1</sup> Cf. BDB (393-395); Holladay (1971:128-129).

<sup>2</sup> Cf. Huffmon (1966:31f.); Mays (1969:64); A/F (336); and Stuart (1987:75).



The motif recurs throughout Hosea by the repetition of the term.<sup>3</sup>

#### 4:6

My people are destroyed for lack of the knowledge (מבלי הרעת).  
Because you have rejected the knowledge (כי אתה הרעת מאסת),  
I will reject you from being a priest to me.  
Since you have forgotten the instruction of your God,  
I will also forget your children.

The motif in 4:1 of the guilt of Israel's break of the relationship between God and Israel due to the lack of knowledge or recognition of God recurs in 4:6, in which Yahweh condemns severely the want of knowledge of the people by way of the repetitions of הרעת 'the knowledge', מאס 'to reject', and שכח 'to forget'. In particular Yahweh strongly denounces the priests' guilt in rejecting knowledge using both the emphatic pronoun אתה 'you' (v6ba) and the chiasm with מאס (v6ba, β), since their rejection of the knowledge has resulted in the people's lack of knowledge, calling for Yahweh's punishment over them (v4ba). Therefore, just as the priests rejected the knowledge of Yahweh, he will reject their priesthood in a manner corresponding to their guilt (v4bβ); and just as the priests have forgotten the law of their God, Yahweh in turn will forget the priests' children (v4c), which can mean that he will disregard them, rather than pass them by without punishing them.

In Hosea שכח does not mean to fail to remember, but signifies opposition to

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<sup>3</sup> Cf. in Hosea ער' occurs nineteen times, while another two terms נאמ 'faithfulness' appears four times (2:22[20]; 4:1; 5:9; 12:1[11:12]) and נאמ 'steadfast love' six times (2:21[19]; 4:1; 6:4, 6; 10:12; 12:7) respectively.

the knowledge of God: the conscious or deliberate rejection of the knowledge. Israel accordingly does not instruct, learn and obey the law of her God (cf. 2:15[13]; 8:14; 13:6). Israel's lack of knowledge or recognition of God because of the priests' irresponsibility over teaching the law of their God to their people has hence been a major motive for the people's destruction.

#### 5:4

Their deeds do not permit them  
to return to their God  
For the spirit of harlotry is in their midst,  
and they do not know Yahweh (וְאֵת יְהוָה לֹא יָדְעוּ).

Hos 5:3-4 is marked off as a literary unit by an inclusion (יָדַעְתִּי 'I know' in v3aα and יָדְעוּ 'they know' in v4bβ). The repetition of יָדַע serves to contrast Yahweh's knowledge of Ephraim to Ephraim's lack of knowledge of Yahweh.

Verse 4a describes the impossibility of the people returning to Yahweh as a result of their deeds (מַעַלְלֵיהֶם). The word מַעַלֵּל can convey a good or bad deed or practice of man.<sup>4</sup> However, the term is used every time in Hosea to denote only evil works (cf. 4:9; 7:2; 9:15; 12:3[2]). Verse 4bα makes clear why they are not able to convert to Yahweh: the spirit of harlotry (רוּחַ זָנוּנִים) is within them: it prevails in the midst of them rather than possessing them.<sup>5</sup> Instead of the prostituting spirit Yahweh should be in the midst of Israel as a holy people, as in 11:9b ('I am God and not man, the Holy One in your

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<sup>4</sup> Cf. BDB (760); Holladay (1978:207).

<sup>5</sup> Cf. Wolff (1974:99-100); Stuart (1987:93)



midst' (בקרבר)).<sup>6</sup> However, Yahweh was not able to be in the midst of them, since Yahweh's holiness and Israel's corruption cannot co-exist. As a result, their spirit of harlotry has been the cause of the destruction of their knowledge of Yahweh, which hence reflects the motif of Israel's lack of knowledge prevailing in the previous 4:1, 6.

### 6:3

Let us know (ונרעה),  
Let us strive to know Yahweh (נרדפה את יהוה);  
his going forth is as certain as the dawn;  
he will come to us like the rain,  
like the spring rains that water the earth.

Hos 6:1-3 is commonly recognized as a penitential song seeking Yahweh in the midst of the national crisis during the dangerous period of 733 B.C. resulting from Tiglath pileser III's attack on the northern kingdom. The song is composed of two invitations: 1) 'let us return to Yahweh (v1a)', which is followed by their expression of the confidence that Yahweh will save them from their present dangerous situation ((vv1b-2); 2) 'let us press on to know Yahweh (v3a)', which is followed by their expression of the assurance that they can certainly know Yahweh (v3b). Both invitations take up two motifs of Hosea: שׁוּב 'to return' and יָדָע 'to know'. The two invitations, however, were not effective in saving Israel from her crisis because of her insincere attitude over returning to Yahweh and seeking knowledge of Yahweh. In vv4ff, Yahweh laments over her transitory love (v4), which has called for Yahweh's judgment over her (v5) and also for Yahweh's manifestation of his desirable will toward his people in order for

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<sup>6</sup> קרב 'midst' occurs only twice in Hosea, in 5:4; 11:9.



them to escape further punishment (v6).

In the light of this literary context of 6:1-6, the repetition of  $\text{עָרַ'$  in v3 seems to be necessarily regarded as descriptive of the people's desperate situation, and need of Yahweh's immediate attention and saving response, rather than of their real enthusiasm for the knowledge of Yahweh. The use of  $\text{עָרַ'$  in v3 thus also reflects Israel's want of knowledge of Yahweh as in 4:1, 6; 5:4.

In the latter part of the passage, we may suppose an influence from a form of religion with concerns with fertility, weather, and season (cf. 10:12). In this sense, Israel seems to have known that Yahweh, not Baal, is the God of fertility, weather, and season as in 1 Kgs 18:37, 39 ('Answer me, O Yahweh, answer me, that this people may know that thou, O Yahweh, art God ---' 'and they said, "Yahweh he is the God; Yahweh, he is the God"').

## 8:2

To me they cry,  
'God of Israel,<sup>7</sup> we know you ( $\text{יָדַעְנוּךָ}$ ).

Hos 8:1-3 constitutes a literary unit, and is a brief summary of Yahweh's accusation of her breaking Yahweh's covenant and his law and the resultant punishment of Israel. The issues are specified in vv4ff. The opening verse 1a ('Set the trumpet to your lips, for as a vulture is over the house of

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<sup>7</sup> Reading the phrase as a broken construct form, which is interrupted by  $\text{יָדַעְנוּךָ}$  'we know you', and hence vocalizing  $\text{אֱלֹהֵי}$  for  $\text{אֱלֹהֵי}$  'my God' in the MT, since 'My God, we know you Israel' in the MT seems to be strange; cf. A/F (490).

Yahweh') has the historic background of successive threats from Assyria in 5:8-6:6. The remaining vv1b-3 presents concisely the guilt of Israel in breaking Yahweh's covenant and his law, following his announcement of the punishment of Israel.

In v2, in the midst of their national crisis, Israel cries to Yahweh to claim that they know Yahweh as God of Israel: 'God of Israel, we know you (יִרְעֹנוּךְ)'. Here the term יָרַע 'to know' means in part, as in 4:1, 6, to recognize Yahweh as God of Israel, and thus to obey his covenant and law. Their crying to Yahweh should hence express their loyalty to Yahweh's covenant and to his law. There was no sincerity, however, in their cry to Yahweh, as in the penitential song in 6:1-3, since they have broken Yahweh's covenant and transgressed his law. In Hosea זָעַק 'to cry' occurs once more in 7:14, in which their crying to Yahweh is also hypocritical: וְלֹא זָעַקוּ אֵלַי בְּלִבָּם 'they do not cry to me from their heart'. In this connection, their claim that they know Yahweh may have come from their conviction that Israel is Yahweh's unique people chosen from all the nations of the world (cf. Am 3:2), and hence Yahweh is responsible for Israel's salvation and protection without regard to Israel's deeds. In the light of the literary context of Hos 8:1-3, however, their assertion of knowledge of Yahweh is also to be regarded as actual ignorance of Yahweh.

In short, the use of יָרַע in 4:1, 6; 5:4; 6:3; 8:2 is consistent in its meaning throughout: Israel's lack of knowledge of Yahweh has led to Yahweh's indictment, which will be followed by her destruction.

#### IV.5.1.2 Israel's Ignorance

##### 2:10

But she did not know (וְהִיא לֹא יָדְעָה)  
that it was I who gave her  
the grain, the wine, and the oil,  
and who lavished upon her silver  
and gold which they made into the Baal.

Hos 2:4-17[2-15] beginning with רִיב 'to have a dispute' describes Yahweh's indictments of the guilt of Israel's infidelity, in which, following Yahweh's announcements of punishment, she is represented as the unfaithful wife. Verse 10 accuses the unfaithful wife of lack of the knowledge that Yahweh is the giver of the prosperous produce of the land (cf. 2:17; Dt 26:5-9): she thinks instead that Baal is the god of fertility (cf. 2:7, 14). The phrase לֹא יָדְעָה in 2:10 hence serves to reveal Israel's foolishness and thoughtless forgetfulness: her failure to acknowledge that the produce of the land is the gift of Yahweh as her lord (Cf. 2:15).

##### 7:9

Foreigners have eaten away his strength,  
but he does not know it (וְהוּא לֹא יָדַע).  
Even gray hair is sprinkled upon him,  
but he does not know it (וְהוּא לֹא יָדַע).

Hos 7:8-16 describes the state of Ephraim among the nations. In v9 Yahweh laments over Ephraim's present state, since though Ephraim has already seriously lost (cf. the perfect form אָכַל) his strength and vitality, no one knows his own situation. The twofold repetition of 'but he knows it not' and the emphatic pronoun הוּא 'he' function to lay emphasis on the



foolishness of Ephraim. The stupidity of Ephraim is, as discussed earlier, reinforced by the image of an easily deceived silly dove, depicting the uselessness of Ephraim's relationship to the nations: his dependence on the two great powers of Assyria and Egypt. All these images of Ephraim demonstrate Ephraim's lack of knowledge of Yahweh: Ephraim does not know his destiny – his destruction by Yahweh is approaching.

### 11:3

Yet it was I who taught Ephraim to walk,  
I took them in my<sup>8</sup> arms;  
but they did not know (וְלֹא יָדְעוּ) that I healed them.

Chapter 11 portrays Yahweh as a father who tenderly and patiently guides and cares for a child. In v3, Yahweh had held Ephraim by his hands at the beginning of their hesitant steps, gathered them up and protected them in his arms when they staggered, and healed them when they were sick. However, Ephraim did not know or acknowledge their experience of Yahweh's healing their illness, which Hosea attributes to Yahweh's saving act for his people (cf. 5:13; 6:1; 7:1; 14:5[4]). The image of Yahweh as healer goes back to the exodus (Ex 15:26) and the wilderness (Nu 12:13). Ephraim should hence have acknowledged the manifest fact of Yahweh's healing their sickness from the very beginning of their history. וְלֹא יָדְעוּ in 11:3 therefore serves to disclose Ephraim's stupidity in their rejecting Yahweh's saving acts in healing their illness.

In short, the use of וְלֹא יָדְעוּ in 2:10[8]; 7:9 (x2); 11:3 witnesses to Ephraim's

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<sup>8</sup> Reading with LXX, Syr, and Vul for 'his' in the MT.

foolishness in that they did not know or acknowledge Yahweh as the giver of the produce of the land (2:10); that they were not aware of their approaching destruction (7:9); or of Yahweh as their healer (11:3): hence even to their rejection of these facts.

#### IV.5.1.3 Israel's Future Knowledge of Yahweh

##### 2:21-22

I will betroth you to me forever;  
I will betroth you to me in righteousness  
and in justice, in love, and in mercy.  
I will betroth you to me in faithfulness.  
Then you shall know Yahweh (וידעת את יהוה).<sup>1</sup>

Hos 2:18-25[16-23] describes what will happen in the time of renewal and restoration. Verses 21-22 portrays the betrothal of God and his bride. The repetition of **אֲרֶשְׁתִּיךָ לִי** 'I will betroth you to me' three times, indicates Yahweh's enthusiasm to have an intimate relationship with his bride Israel through his betrothal. The five attributes of Yahweh (righteousness, justice, steadfast love, mercy, and faithfulness) confirm how Yahweh's love for his bride is intensive, passionate, and firm.

The term **יָדָע** in v22b, which often has sexual overtones, is used to denote intimacy in terms of marriage metaphor; and at the same time the term

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<sup>1</sup> A number of Hebrew manuscripts and Vul read 'And you will know that I am (**כִּי אֲנִי**) Yahweh'. This reading, however, is not a necessary one, since the reading has no parallel in Hosea, and 'to know Yahweh' in this verse expresses or at least includes a more intimate relationship in terms of the consummation of the marriage of Yahweh and Israel as husband and wife.

conveys Yahweh's close relationship with Israel, which is established by the betrothal by the five attributes of Yahweh. As a result, his bride Israel will know (יִדְעַת) Yahweh as the giver of the produce of the land (cf. 2:10), and no longer will go after her lovers the Baals (2:15) forgetting Yahweh, but acknowledge Yahweh as her lord and husband (2:22; cf. 2:9, 18).

Yahweh's new relationship with Israel will be fulfilled, in the light of the above structural analysis of Hos 12-14, in respect of the future Israel rather than the contemporary Israel of Hosea's time. The eschatological formula וְהָיָה בַּיּוֹם הַהוּא 'and it shall happen on that day' (vv18, 23) serves to convey the future achievement of the new relationship of Yahweh with Israel.

#### IV.5.1.4 Israel's Proper Knowledge of Yahweh

##### 5:9

Ephraim shall become a desolation  
on the day of punishment.  
Among the tribes of Israel  
I declare what is true (הוֹרַעְתִּי נֶאֱמָנָה).

Hos 5:9a threatens, in the background of the Syro-Ephraim war, the approaching destruction of Ephraim, which has been made known (cf. the perfect form הוֹרַעְתִּי) to Ephraim with certainty by Yahweh through Hosea, as Hosea's prophetic oracles should be fulfilled by the power of Yahweh. In response to the words of Hosea, Ephraim should hence comprehend the coming crisis and the need to escape it.



For I desire love rather than sacrifice,  
and the knowledge of God (וִדְעַת אֱלֹהִים)  
rather than burnt offerings.

Hos 6:4-6 is Yahweh's response to the penitential song (6:1-3). In vv4-6, Yahweh agonizes over their unsteady love (חֶסֶד) like a morning cloud, like the dew that goes early away (v4), followed by Yahweh's judgment over them through the words of prophets (v5). Verse 6 beginning with 'כִּי' 'for' demonstrates why Yahweh has punished the people in v5, and instructs them to pursue חֶסֶד 'steadfast love' and וִדְעַת אֱלֹהִים 'knowledge of God' to avoid future judgment from Yahweh. Israel having once returned to Yahweh (v1), should seek steadfast love and knowledge of God sincerely (v6).

Here we can comment on the use of knowledge of God/Yahweh in Hosea as follows: in the book of Hosea 'knowledge of God' occurs twice (4:1; 6:6), while 'knowledge of Yahweh' does not appear. On the other hand, 'Yahweh' is used as the object of יָדָע three times in Hosea (2:22[20]; 5:4; 6:3), while 'God' occurs twice as the object of יָדָע (8:2; 13:4). Since there are two different objects to the verb יָדָע, we might be dealing with two sorts of knowledge. They seem, however, to have basically the same meaning, since if we compare the passages of knowing אֱלֹהִים (4:1; 6:6; 8:2; 13:4) with the corresponding יְהוָה (2:22[20]; 6:3; cf. 2:10; 11:3), there appears to be no difference between the two kinds of knowledge. Despite the fact that 'Yahweh' is contrasted with Baal rather more than 'God' is, 'Yahweh' may still correspond to 'God', as in 6:3, 6. Hence in this sense the two sorts of knowledge seem indistinguishable: the two objects appear to have been used

by chance rather than by design.<sup>2</sup>

**9:7**

The days of punishment have come,  
the days of recompense have come;  
Israel shall know (it) (יִדְעוּ יִשְׂרָאֵל<sup>3</sup>).  
'The prophet is a fool,  
the man of the spirit is mad.'  
Because your guilt is great, and the hostility is great.

Hos 9:1-9 accuses Israel of the cultic iniquity of Baal worship, then reports Yahweh's threat of punishment over her. In vv7-9, the repetition of יָמַי 'the days of (punishment and recompense) have come' with the perfect tense (יָמַי) at the beginning of v7 serves to lay stress on the fact that Yahweh's judgment over Israel has already begun. In v7a $\beta$ , Hosea thus announces to Israel that she should know her present situation to escape Yahweh's punishment near in time. In vv7b-9a, Israel scorns Hosea's proclamation of Yahweh's judgment over against her sins. In v9b, the repetition of פָּקַד 'to punish' in v7a hence confirms that Yahweh's punishment is certain. יָרַע in v7a $\beta$ , therefore, is employed to make Israel recognise properly the temporary suspension of Yahweh's punishment, since otherwise they will sooner or later know it.

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<sup>2</sup> Similarly, Mays (1969:63) notes that 'there is no discernible distinction between the formulations using God and Yahweh as the object of knowing; they are synonymous in Hosea'.

<sup>3</sup> LXX κακωθησεται presupposes יָרַע for יָדַע in the MT, which, however, is supported by א' (עָרַו), ס' (עָרַוּ), and Tar. The MT seems to be readable in the light of the context as: Israel should have proper knowledge concerning the approaching punishment over her, as in 5:9.

#### IV.5.1.5 Yahweh's Knowledge of Israel

##### 5:3

I, I know Ephraim (אני ידעתי אפרים).  
Israel is not hidden from me;  
for now, Ephraim, you have played the harlot,  
Israel is defiled.

As noted on 5:4 above, Hos 5:3-4 is formed as a unit by the inclusion 'I know' in v3aα and ידעו 'they know' in v4bβ. The rhetorical device serves to contrast Yahweh's knowledge of the guilt of Ephraim with Ephraim's lack of knowledge of Yahweh who knows their iniquity, since they are defiled as a result of their prostitution. Yahweh is very conscious of Israel's defilement (טמא) caused by the cultic guilt of her prostitution (זנה) (v3b), as we see also from the parallel use of זנה and אשם 'to become guilty' in 4:15a ('Though you *play the harlot*, O Israel, let not Judah *become guilty*'). Ephraim should thus return and repent of their sin to their God, since their sin is not concealed from Yahweh's keen knowledge of Ephraim, which is stressed by the emphatic pronoun אני 'I': אני ידעתי אפרים 'As for me, I know Ephraim' (5:3a).

##### 8:4

They themselves made kings, but not from me.  
They made princes,  
but I did not acknowledge (them) (ולא ידעתי).  
With their silver and gold they made idols for themselves,  
so that it may be cut off.

Hos 8:1-3 describes Yahweh's threat to punish Israel's guilt in breaking Yahweh's covenant and his law. Verse 4 specifies her guilt in the spheres of



her electing kings and princes (v4a) and of her idols in her cult (v4b). The double use of the negative  $\text{לֹא}$  'not' (v4a) functions to lay emphasis on Hosea's severe denunciation of Israel's making kings and princes without Yahweh's acknowledgement, since Yahweh as supreme ruler governs over Israel, and her kings are Yahweh's representatives or regents, who should hence come from Yahweh ( $\text{מִמֶּנִּי}$  'from me' in v4a), not from the people's selection of kings.

In Hosea, princes are closely associated with kings.<sup>4</sup> Together they constitute the whole monarchy of Israel. The princes are also accused by Hosea, since Yahweh did not know them. Here  $\text{יָדָע}$  'to know' does not mean that Yahweh was not aware of the people's installment of princes, but in the light of the synonymous structure of  $\text{וְלֹא מִמֶּנִּי}$  'but not from me' //  $\text{וְלֹא יָדָעְתִּי}$  'but I did not know', the term denotes that Yahweh did not recognize or acknowledge the status or legality of the princes.<sup>5</sup> At the same time, however, it should be noted that although Hosea intensively condemned Israel's kings and princes, there is no indication of Hosea's denouncing the institution of Israel's kingship itself, since Hosea accused only Israel's rejection of Yahweh's sovereignty over her.

#### IV.5.2 $\text{יָדָע}$ in Hosea 12-14

$\text{יָדָע}$  occurs only once in Hos 12:1-14:9, in 13:4, which describes Israel's knowledge of Yahweh.

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<sup>4</sup> The pairing of 'king' and 'prince' occurs five times in Hosea, in 3:4; 7:3, 5; 8:10; 13:10.

<sup>5</sup> A/F (492) notes that  $\text{יָדָע}$  in 8:4 means 'approval'.

#### IV.5.2.1 Israel's Knowledge of Yahweh

##### 13:4

I am Yahweh your God from the land of Egypt.  
You should not know (לֹא תֵדָע) any God but me;  
for there is no saviour except me.

Hos 13:4-8 begins with Yahweh's review of his normative salvation history of Exodus (v4) and Wilderness (v5), followed by his indictment of Israel's forgetting Yahweh in the land (v6), and it ends with Yahweh's threat of punishment (vv7-8).

In v4, Yahweh, through the self-presentation formula, makes clear that he has been known as Israel's God from the time of the Exodus. Therefore, in response to his saving acts for Israel, she should know or recognize only Yahweh, since he is the sole saviour of Israel. יָדָע in v4ba hence lays emphasis on Israel's responsibility to have a proper knowledge of Yahweh: to recognize or acknowledge only Yahweh as her saviour.<sup>6</sup>

#### IV.5.3 יָדָע in Hosea 14:10

##### 14:10

Whoever is wise, let him understand these things,  
whoever is intelligent, let him know them (וִידָעוּם).  
For the ways of Yahweh are right,  
the righteous walk in them,  
but sinners stumble in them.

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<sup>6</sup> So Lang (1983:30-36).

The final verse is a kind of conclusion to the whole book of Hosea. It seems that the author of this verse presupposes he has already interpreted the book of Hosea, and advises readers of all successive generations to understand and know Hosea's oracles and obey them for their life, if they are wise and intelligent; the ways of Yahweh are right, and the righteous walk in them. Only a foolish man<sup>7</sup> would not acknowledge the words of Yahweh and so stumble in them. The author of the last verse hence appropriately reminds readers of the book of Hosea that knowing Yahweh is one of the important motifs of Hosea: Israel, as discussed above, has continually showed her lack of knowledge of Yahweh, and this has led to her destruction. In this connection, the note of A/F (647) is appropriate: the concern of the author of Hos 14:10 is for knowledge of God (4:1, 6; 6:3). The book of Hosea witnesses to the right ways of Yahweh for a right life. Our life and death hence depend on whether or not we know Yahweh's right ways and obey them. The final verse of the book thus advises its readers to have proper knowledge of Yahweh in their life.

#### IV.5.4 The Relationship of the Use of יָדָע in Hosea 12-14 to that in 1-11

It now remains to examine how the key word יָדָע, although it only occurs within Hos 12:1-14:9, in 13:4, functions in connection with the term in Hos 1-11; and then in 14:10.

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<sup>7</sup> For a discussion of this issue in Hos 14:10, see Seow (1982); in Hos 12, see Ginsberg (1961).



יָדָע in 13:4ba ('You should not know any God but me') is used to instruct Israel to have a proper knowledge or recognition of Yahweh exclusively. Verse 5 describes the love and care of Yahweh who fed Israel in the wilderness in the land of drought. However, in the immediately following v6, Hosea blames Israel's guilt on her forgetting (שָׁכַח) Yahweh, on her self-satisfaction in spite of his feeding her. So, in vv4-6, Hosea reviews the deeds of Israel's ancestors from the very beginning of her history in terms of יָדָע: Yahweh commended Israel to know or recognize Yahweh, the God of Exodus (v4) alone. Israel, however, forgot the proper knowledge of Yahweh, who knew, saved, and fed her from the very beginning of her history and throughout it. The foolishness of ignoring and even rejecting the proper knowledge of Yahweh by the Israel of Hosea's time, as her ancestors did, is described in terms of Ephraim as an unwise child in v13aβ: הוּא בֶן לֹא חָכָם 'he is an unwise child'. We can accordingly discern three major motifs involved in יָדָע in Hos 13:4: 1) Israel's proper knowledge of Yahweh (v4); 2) Israel's ignorance of Yahweh (v6); 3) Israel's ignorance (v13). These three motifs all can also be noticed in Hos 1-11; 14:10 as we have seen in the discussion of the passages above.

In the light of the above analysis of יָדָע in Hosea, it can be claimed that although the key word יָדָע occurs only once in 12:1-14:9, in 13:4, the term serves to direct the attention of the Israel of Hosea's days toward one of his major themes: Israel's proper knowledge of Yahweh, thus to avoid Yahweh's impending judgment over her, since from the very beginning of his oracles (4:1), Hosea repeatedly condemned her lack of this knowledge. It is therefore proper that the term occurs in the final verse of the book of Hosea (14:10) to encourage the readers of the book to understand, *know*, and obey the

oracles of Hosea in their lives.

#### IV.6 בקע

The root בקע 'to tear open' occurs only twice in Hosea, in 13:8 (piel); 14:1[13:16] (pual).<sup>8</sup>

#### 13:8

I will fall upon them like a bereaved bear,  
I will tear open their heart.  
I will devour them there like a lion,  
wild beasts shall tear them (תבקעם).

Hos 13:4-8 states, in the context of the final years of the history of Israel, that Yahweh is the God of the Exodus and wilderness, and so Israel should know (ידע) him only (vv4-5); with the satisfaction of their human desires, however, they forgot (שכח) Yahweh; vv7-8 thus announce the punishment of Yahweh of Israel in terms of the savage violence of his wrath. As a result of their lack of knowledge of Yahweh, their forgetting him leading to a perverse relationship with him, he is pictured as threatening attacks like those of various wild beasts, in contrast to his role of shepherd in the Exodus and wilderness. The attack of wild beasts is also a feature of ancient Near Eastern treaty curses which threaten those who break the treaty,<sup>9</sup> and of the Sinai covenant (cf. Lev 26:22; Dt 32:24).

In 5:14, Yahweh had already announced himself as lion (שחל) who rips his

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<sup>8</sup> Cf. in Amos, the root בקע appears once in 1:5 in the qal inf. (בקעם).

<sup>9</sup> Cf. Hillers (1964:54-56).



people to pieces like an enraged animal. In 13:7-8, two animals (leopard (נמר) and bear (בר)) are added. The list of devouring animals (lion, leopard, bear) makes the image of Yahweh's judgment a horrifying one. In particular, in v8, Hosea clearly presents the judgment of Yahweh on the immediate future in gruesome imagery: Yahweh himself will attack Israel like a bereaved bear who, thus with blind rage, tears open (קרע) the enemy, to kill them. After the drastic attack of the bear, wild beasts shall rip them (תבקעם). The piel of בקע means 'to tear into pieces', 'to rip open'. So, the effect of the attack of wild beasts as the instruments of Yahweh (cf. 2:14, 20[12, 18]) is not simply wounding, but slaying: the person is to be completely lost by death. The image of the total destruction is similar to that in v3. The employment of בקע in the piel in 13:8 thus emphasises, with קרע, the severity of the approaching judgment in its totally destructive consequences.

#### 14:1

Samaria shall suffer for her guilt,  
for she has rebelled against her God.  
They shall fall by the sword;  
their infants shall be dashed in pieces,  
their pregnant women shall be torn open (יבקעו).

In the announcement of punishment for Samaria, Hosea presents a horrible and vivid picture seen in terms of a military attack by Assyria and the three-year siege of the city (cf. 13:15a קרים 'east wind'; 2 Kgs 17:5). The three-part attack involves violent slaughter, a gruesome picture, fulfilling vv7-8: 1) they shall fall by the enemy's sword; even the most helpless people shall suffer brutal death: 2) their infants shall be dashed in pieces; 3) their pregnant women shall be torn open (יבקעו) (cf. 2 Kgs 15:16; Am 1:13).



In short, the repetition of **בָּקַע** only in Hosea 13:8; 14:1, with the near end of the northern kingdom as background, lays emphasis on the intense violence of the impending destruction. Baal, the god of fertility, who has no power to contest the violent behaviour of Yahweh, led Israel to total ruin: death in fulfilment of 13:1, 14.

#### IV.7 אָהַב

The root **אָהַב** 'to love' occurs nineteen times in Hosea. The use of the term falls into three major categories:<sup>1</sup>

- 1) Israel's love of persons or things opposed to Yahweh (2:7, 9, 12, 14, 15[5, 7, 10, 12, 13]; 3:1 (x2); 4:18; 8:9; 9:1, 10; 12:8[7])
- 2) Israel's love in general (10:11)
- 3) Yahweh's love for Israel (3:1 (x2); 9:15; 11:1, 4; 14:5[4])

For the purpose of the present study, we will discuss each verse above in two parts: in both Hos 1-11 and 12-14, and then examine how the key word **אָהַב** in 14:5[4] functions in Hosea as a whole.

##### IV.7.1 אָהַב in Hosea 1-11

##### IV.7.1.1 Israel's Love of Persons or Things Opposed to Yahweh

###### 2:7

For their mother has played the harlot;

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<sup>1</sup> Stuart (1987:16) similarly lists the employment of the term as in the above. However, he notes only 16 appearances of **אָהַב** instead of 19. He has obviously failed to notice 8:9; 9:15; 14:5[4].

she who conceived them has acted shamefully.  
For she said, 'I will go after my lovers (מֵאֲהָבַי),  
who give me my bread and my water,  
my wool and my flax, my oil and my drink'.

Hos 2:4-17[2-15] describes Hosea's private life in a broken marriage as a result of the dissolute behaviour of his adulterous wife (vv4-7). Hosea thus increases his chastisement, in order to obtain her acknowledgement of himself (Yahweh) as her husband.

In this passage, the piel active participle of מֵאֲהָבַי 'lovers' appears five times (vv7, 9, 12, 14, 15 [5, 7, 10, 12, 13]).<sup>2</sup> In the Old Testament, the term is used only in the sense of partners or adulterous lovers.<sup>3</sup> In the Old Testament, the idea of Baals, the Canaanite gods of sex rite and fertility cult, as 'lovers' appears first in Hosea, and thereafter in Jeremiah and Ezekiel.<sup>4</sup>

While 'lovers' (מֵאֲהָבַי) has three possible senses: 'those who love one', 'those whom one loves', and 'those who love each other', in Hosea, only the second is found. However, there may be some degree of irony in Hosea's usage. Presumably Israel believes the relationship to be a genuinely mutual one. In this case, the moral question of her desertion of Yahweh does not impinge on this. Yet inescapably, given the polemic context, the word is meant to be seen as expressive of a naive and stupid love. Hosea puts into her mouth

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<sup>2</sup> Cf. מֵאֲהָבַי 'lovers' in 8:9.

<sup>3</sup> Cf. Wolff (1974:35).

<sup>4</sup> The term מֵאֲהָבַי occurs sixteen times in the Old Testament, and is found especially in Hosea (x5), Jeremiah (x3), and Ezekiel (x6): Hos 2:7, 9, 12, 14, 15 [5, 7, 10, 12, 13]; Jer 22:20, 22; 30:14; Ezek 16:33, 36, 37; 23:5, 9, 12; Zech 13:6; Lam 1:19.

a term which can be ironical, when the true nature and consequences of the Baal relationship become evident: the infertility of death.

Verse 7[5] denounces the guilt of the mother as a disgraceful woman, since she has played the harlot and followed her lovers. Her crime is proved by her own statement: 'I will go after my lovers, ---'. The quotation witnesses to her resolute and even bold attitude in seeking her lovers, since common prostitutes would wait for lovers to come to them (cf. Gen 38:14-18; Jer 3:2). The emphasis in v7 is that she (Israel) thought of her lovers, the Baals, as those who would give her agricultural produce as the price of her prostitution (cf. 2:14[12]; 9:1; Gen 38:16), forgetting that Yahweh was the real source of her life.

## 2:9

She shall pursue her lovers (מֵאַהֲבִיהָ),  
but not overtake them;  
and she shall seek them,  
but shall not find (them).  
Then she shall say, 'I will go  
and return to my first husband,  
for it was better for me then than now'.

As a result of the immediate response to her shameful prostitution (v7[5]), in v8 לִכְן 'therefore' announces Yahweh's action of punishment in shutting up her way and paths to prevent her from pursuing her lovers, which represents her practice of Baal worship. Verse 9 describes, in contrast to Yahweh's action, her determined reaction that she would resolutely pursue (תִּרְדֹּף) and seek (בִּקֵּשׁ) her lovers (מֵאַהֲבִיהָ), although this was to end in a fruitless search. Despite her diligent pursuit of her lovers, they do not respond at all, probably because of their inability to do anything for her (cf.



v12[10]). The 'seeking and (but not) finding' is reminiscent of a motif from the Canaanite religion of the absent deity (cf. 5:6; 1 Kgs 18:27). Hosea here uses it in a polemic against the Canaanite ritual. When she fails to obtain access to her lovers, the Baals, she is to return to her former husband, Yahweh (v9b).

## **2:12**

Now I will expose her lewdness  
in the sight of her lovers (מֵאֵהָבִיהָ)  
but no one shall rescue her from my hand.

At the very beginning of v11[9], לכן 'therefore' introduces the second announcement of Yahweh's judgment which continues through v15. Verse 12 describes that Yahweh will remove the woman's clothing, and expose her lewdness (גִּלְתָּהּ) to public shame. Her lovers will only stand and look with an embarrassed gaze at her nakedness, but will not be able to protect her from the disgraceful situation, since they have no power to interrupt or compete with the action of Yahweh. Here Hosea demonstrates to Israel the impotence of her lovers, the Baals. She should thus have acknowledged Yahweh as the giver of the produce in the land, since Yahweh, not the Baals, is the lord over nature.

## **2:14**

And I will lay waste her vines  
and her fig trees,  
of which she said,  
'These are the fee,  
which my lovers (מֵאֵהָבִי) have given me'.  
I will turn them into a forest,  
and the beasts of the field shall devour them.

Verse 14[12] continues Yahweh's punishment over her, since the faithless woman calls the vines and fig trees as her hire, fee (אֶתְנָה) in return for her prostitution. However, the prostitute's fee is prohibited in Yahweh's worship (Dt 23:18). Verse 14 thus implies that her vines and fig trees are detestable produce, since they came from her prostitution with her lovers, the Baals. The vines and fig trees which Israel considers the gift of her lovers are hence to be abandoned and desolate as a result of the wrath of Yahweh. Again her lovers, the Baals, are not able to react at all. Once more the power of Yahweh is demonstrated in contrast to the impotence of the Baals.

## 2:15

I will punish her for the feast days of the Baals  
to whom she burned incense  
and decked herself with her ring and jewelry,  
and went after her lovers (מֵאֲהָבֶיהָ)  
but forgot me, says Yahweh.

In v15[13], Hosea for the first time speaks of Israel's lovers (vv7, 9, 12, 14) by the name of בְּעָלִים 'Baals' (cf. v19). In Hosea both singular and plural forms of בַּעַל are used (sg - 2:10, 18; 13:1; pl - 2:15, 19; 11:2). The term reflects various uses and meanings.<sup>5</sup> However, the term itself, sg or pl, means basically 'master, owner, husband'. In this connection, the term בְּעָלִים in v15 can denote divine masters who control the produce of nature. Thus, Yahweh announces his punishment over Israel's burnt offerings and her following her lovers, the Baals, her decking herself with rings and jewelry, her wilful and faulty involvement in Baal worship, since her

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<sup>5</sup> Cf. Wolff (1974:38-40); A/F (256-258).

determined saying 'I will go after my lovers' (v7) is fulfilled by 'and she went after her lovers' (v15).

Verse 15[13]c (וָאֵתִי שָכַחָה 'and she forgot me') describes why Yahweh indicts Israel as guilty: Israel 'forgot' Yahweh. The short sentence contrasts Yahweh with Israel's lovers by placing 'אֵתִי 'me' immediately next to מֵאֲהָבָיהָ 'her lovers' and at the same time serves to emphasize that Yahweh, not the Baals, whom Israel followed as her lovers, is her real lord who gives her the fertility of nature. שָכַח 'to forget' in Hosea (2:15; 4:6; 8:14; 13:6) contrasts precisely with the important term יָדָע 'to know'.<sup>6</sup> It is treated as deliberate crime, which resulted in Israel's following her lovers, the Baals, forsaking Yahweh.

In short, the use of the term מֵאֲהָבָיִם 'lovers' in Hos 2 can be summarized as follows: Israel goes after her lovers, the Baals, since she thought that they gave her the produce of the land (vv7, 14). Yahweh thus encourages her not to follow them, by blocking her way and the paths leading to her lovers (v9). However, she still does not acknowledge Yahweh as the giver of produce (v10); and hence as a result more severe punishment from Yahweh follows in his uncovering her nakedness in front of her powerless lovers (v12). In v15, Hosea proclaims that the guilt of Israel's following her lovers, the Baals, came from her wilfully forgetting (שָכַח) Yahweh, in direct contrast to the important motif of יָדָע 'to know' in Hosea.

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<sup>6</sup> Cf. IV.5.3 above.



And Yahweh said to me again,<sup>7</sup> "Go, love a woman who loves (אהבת)<sup>8</sup> a partner and is an adulteress; even as Yahweh loves the people of Israel, though they turn to other gods and love (ואהב) cakes of raisins'.

Hos 3:1-5 makes up a unit of its own, since 2:25[23] completes the salvation oracles of 2:18-25[16-23], and 4:1 commences a passage in lawsuit form with ב'ר 'to have a controversy'. This passage is presented as a prophetic autobiography from Hosea himself, in comparison to a prophetic biography from his disciple (cf. 1:2-9).

In v1, the verb אהב 'to love' occurs four times, dominating the vocabulary of v1. The character of Israel's love for someone and something other than Yahweh is indicated by the second and fourth uses of אהב: Yahweh commands Hosea to love a woman who loves (אהבת) a partner (ער). The term ער can denote a sexual lover (cf. Jer 3:1; Song 5:16). In this context, she is committing adultery, breaking the marriage relationship, and hence is an adulterous woman. In the fourth use of אהב, the woman's love for a partner is meant to correspond to Israel's turning to other gods (אלהים), who represent the Baals (2:15, 19[13, 17]; 11:12), and her love (ואהב) of cakes of raisins signifies her involvement in the false cult, since they are

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<sup>7</sup> עור 'again' is more commonly used to follow the verb it modifies, although it may also be read to modify the preceding verb לך, as in RSV: 'Go again, love ---'; cf. Zech 1:17a (עור קרא 'Cry again').

<sup>8</sup> Reading the active participle (אהבת) with LXX (αγαπῶσαν) (and Syr) for the passive participle (אהבת 'beloved of') in the MT, since the former reading offers a better parallel to the following v1b; in a wider context, if we connect the woman in Hos 2 to that in Hos 3:1, the active attitude of the woman's following her lovers in 2:7, 9, 12, 14, 15 [5, 7, 10, 12, 13] matches that in Hos 3:1.

meant to be used by the worshippers participating in the fertility cult.

To sum up. Out of her lustful love for pleasure, the adulterous woman loved (אהבה) a partner, and in a corresponding manner Israel turned to other gods and loved (ואהב) cakes of raisins for the fertility of the produce.

#### 4:18

A band of drunkards,  
they give themselves to harlotry;  
they love (אהבו) shame more than their glory.<sup>9</sup>

Hos 4 is replete with Yahweh's indictment against Israel: the inhabitants of the land (vv1-3); the priesthood (vv4-10); the false cult (vv11-14); the destruction of the false cult (vv15-19).

In v18a, the reference to drinking (שכר) may refer to a kind of intoxication perhaps like an alcoholic beer, and thus imply the practice of Ephraim's fertility cult relating to drinking (cf. v11). When their drinking is finished, then they commit themselves to harlotry. The high infinitive absolute<sup>10</sup> before the finite verb (הִתְנַהֵּף הִתְנַהֵּף<sup>11</sup>) lays stress on Ephraim's deep enthusiasm and involvement in harlotry; וְזָנָה 'to commit adultery' here refers to her

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<sup>9</sup> Following RSV. 4:17b-18 is very problematic because of the state of the text, and hence any suggested reading including the RSV involves conjecture; see, e.g. Wolff (1974:72-73); for a detailed discussion on this verse, see Emmerson (1974:492-497), whose rendering is: 'When their drink is gone, they engage in prostitution. They love the shame of her wantonness'.

<sup>10</sup> Cf. GKC (\*113); Davidson (1966:86-87).

<sup>11</sup> Lit. 'practice prostitution they practice prostitution'; so 'they certainly practice prostitution'.



sexual corruptness in the fertility cult, in which harlots and cult prostitutes take a part (cf. v14). As a result of her following pagan religious practices characterized by the connection of drunkenness and sexual licentiousness, Ephraim indulged in her continual love (אָהַבָהּ<sup>12</sup> הָבָהּ) of 'shame more than their glory'. Here 'their glory' may signify Yahweh, while 'shame' (קִלְיוֹן)<sup>13</sup> may refer to idols (עֲצָבִים) (cf. v17), that is, Ephraim's lovers, the Baals. In this case, the root אָהַב in v18 is consistent in its use: the term serves to confirm Ephraim's immoral sexual activity in the fertility cult, as in 2:7, 9, 12, 14, 15 [5, 7, 10, 12, 13]; 3:1. Therefore, their cultic perversion only calls for their shame: their destruction by wind (v19).

## 8:9

For they have gone up to Assyria,  
a wild ass wandering off to himself;  
Ephraim has hired lovers (אָהַבָהּ).

Hos 8 reflects the situation of Israel's successive crises begun by the Syro-Ephraimite war in vv5:8-6:6. Hos 8:9-13 in this context describes Israel's dependence on the two dominant powers of Assyria (v9) and Egypt (v13) in the midst of Israel's national distress.

Verse 9 depicts the last king Hoshea resorting to Assyria and Tiglath-pileser III (cf. 7:8-12) rather than seeking Yahweh to prevent the whole conquest of Israel. In 7:11, Ephraim is said to be like a silly dove, whilst here she is compared with wild ass (פָּרָה), which lives in herds, but refrains from

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<sup>12</sup> Cf. A/F (378) for אָהַב from Hebrew אָהַב.  
<sup>13</sup> Cf. Glück (1964-1965:57-58).



humans and animals; אֲנִי and אֶנִּי are a word-play; hence the phrase signifies that Ephraim is straying, isolated with no real friend. As a result, she should pay for the services of Assyria (v9b; cf. v10). Hosea describes the deeds of Ephraim in terms of her hiring lovers (אֲהָבִים),<sup>14</sup> which refers to the powerful political allies. So, just like a prostitute pays men to make love to her (cf. Ezek 16:33), Ephraim should submit tributes to Assyria to be saved from the foes' attack over her. In this case the saving act of Assyria for Ephraim in turn can correspond to the harlot's fee (cf. 2:14[12]). Ephraim's guilt of spiritual adultery has thus prevailed not only in her cultic life but also in her politics.

## 9:1

Do not rejoice, O Israel!

Do not exult<sup>15</sup> like the peoples; for you have played the harlot, away from your God. You have loved (אֲהָבִים) a harlot's fee on every threshing floor.

Hos 9:1-9 announces Yahweh's punishment of Israel who are celebrating the days of harvest festival, since their festival was not really that of Yahweh: the festival was syncretistic, mixing Yahwism with Baalism.

In v1a, both שִׂמְחָה and גִּיל are common parallel terms to denote the feature of merrymaking in the autumn harvest festival (cf. Ex 23:16; Dt 16:13-17; Lev 23:33-43; Jud 21:19-21). Although the festival is celebrated on the day of the feast of Yahweh (cf. v5), Hosea condemns Israel's celebration, since it is like that of the peoples (גִּילִים), which indicates Israel's involvement with

<sup>14</sup> Cf. the pl of אֲהָבִים occurs once more in the Old Testament, in Pr 5:19.

<sup>15</sup> Reading גִּיל following LXX (γῆλος) (and Syr, Vul) for גִּיל in the MT.

'foreigners' (cf. 8:12). Israel hence celebrates the festival in the form of the fertility cult, in which she has dealt with Yahweh as if he were Baal who gave the produce of the land (cf. 2:7, 14[5, 12]). Israel has thus become a harlot by her worship of Baal, turning away from Yahweh (v1b). According to her prostitution, she receives a harlot's hire (אֶתְנָה) (cf. 2:14), which Israel has loved (אֶהְבֵּהָ). In this context, the term אֶהְבֵּהָ here denotes not simply 'to love' but 'to make love', since אֶהְבֵּהָ 'you have loved' is in parallel to אֶתְנָה 'you have played the harlot' in v1b (cf. A/F 523). The prostitute's hire here is said to be 'grain' upon every threshing floor (v1cβ), which is an allusion to the place of the pagan fertility worship in honour of Baal at harvest festival times, since Israel had attributed the fertility of the land to Baal. Israel has thus loved the grain, the harvest festival, and the Baals of the fertility cult, forgetting Yahweh as the giver of the produce. Here again the term אֶהְבֵּהָ is used to describe Israel's perverse love of Baal, the crime of her committing adultery.

## 9:10

Like grapes in the wilderness,  
 I found Israel.  
 Like the first fruit on the fig tree,  
 in its first season,  
 I saw your fathers.  
 But they came to Baal-peor,  
 and consecrated themselves to Shame,  
 and became detestable like the thing they loved (כִּאֲהָבָם).

The narrative subject matter, reflectively handled (especially vv10, 15), constitutes Hos 9:10-17 as a unit. Verse 10 describes Yahweh's lament over Israel's fathers: they were the delight of Yahweh in the wilderness period (v10a), a delight brought to an end, however, by her apostasy to the Baal



cult at Baal-peor, as a result of which they became detestable to Yahweh (v10b). In the sight of Yahweh, they were in the wilderness like grapes (נְעֻבִים), and like the first fruit in the fig tree (כְּבִכּוּרָה בְּתֵמָנָה). Both phenomena are unexpected, wondrous, and rare; and so they create the impression of Yahweh's special pleasure and delight in Israel, just like the delight of the first love of a bridegroom in his bride (cf. Jer 2:2-3; Ezek 16:6-14).

Yahweh's joy in Israel, however, immediately came to an end through her encounter with the sex rites of Canaan when she came in contact with the Canaanite cult at Baal-peor. The report in Numbers (25:1ff.) suggests that on the plain east of the Jordan many Israelite men became involved with Moabite and Midianite women in the sexual rites of the fertility cult because of the expectation of securing abundant produce of agriculture in Canaan. Yahweh calls their deeds evil: 'they consecrated themselves to shame (בִּשְׁתָּ)'. The term בִּשְׁתָּ is, as in קִלּוֹן 'shame' (4:7, 18), a derogatory name frequently substituted for 'Baal'. As a result, they became detestable (שְׁקוּצִים) (literally 'detestable things') to Yahweh. The term is often used to denote idols (e.g. 1 Kgs 11:5; 2 Kgs 23:13; Jer 4:1; 7:30; 16:18; 32:34) and also Baals, whom Israel loved (בְּאֵהָבָם) (v10). The term אָהַב in this context thus functions to relate the faithless Israel to her love of Baal in the fertility cult,<sup>16</sup> which may demand her sexual acts to express her loyalty to the god (cf. Num 25). Israel has thus become as loathsome in the eyes of Yahweh as Baal.

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<sup>16</sup> Cf. A/F (542) note Hosea as 'the only prophet who speaks of apostate Israelites as "loving" idols (cc1-3) contrary to Dt 6:5'.



#### IV.7.1.2 Israel's Love in General

##### 10:11

Ephraim was a trained heifer  
that loved (אהבת') to thresh  
and I passed by her fair neck;  
but I will harness Ephraim;  
Judah will plow,  
Jacob will harrow for himself.

Hos 10:9-15 forms a unit: Hosea compares his times with 'the days of Gibeah' (v9) and condemns Israel's reliance on her military power (v13) by two catchwords. This passage describes Yahweh's indictment of Israel's wickedness (עולה in vv9 [cf. עלוה in the MT], 13) and his judgment in the form of war (מלחמה in vv9, 14). In contrast, Hos 10:1-8 ends with the description of the approaching disaster at 10:8, whilst Hos 11 develops a different theme based on a historical retrospect alien from that of the previous passage.

After Yahweh's announcement of the punishment over Israel's iniquity (10:9-10), vv11-13a uses an image drawn from agricultural life to accuse the contemporary Israel of Hosea; vv13b-15 repeats Yahweh's announcement of punishment. Verse 11 begins by depicting the Ephraim of the wilderness as a trained heifer that loved (אהבת') to thresh. The image of Ephraim in v11a is similar to that in 9:10a: the two verses describe Yahweh's pleasure in Israel at the very beginning of her history. The term אהב in this context may refer to Israel's willingness and positive attitude to follow Yahweh as her master and owner. It hence denotes the good relationship between Yahweh and Israel. Verse 11b describes how the owner of the heifer expects

her to do something more than threshing, in which she can freely walk and eat (cf. Dt 25:4). So she needs to put a yoke on the neck for ploughing and harrowing.

The meaning of the metaphors can be interpreted in the light of the following v12: Israel worked for Yahweh willingly in the wilderness period (v11), while Yahweh demands that in the land of Canaan she is to work more than in the wilderness: she should like to live a life of righteousness (צדקה) and steadfast love (חסד) in the land (v12). Israel's life was, however, characterised by the very opposite of Yahweh's requirements: iniquity (רשע), injustice (עולה), and lies (כחש) (v13a), following the consequent punishment from Yahweh (vv13b-15). Israel, like the trained heifer that loved (אהבת') to thresh in the wilderness, should have responded to Yahweh's demands positively, rather than turning to the life like the stubborn one in the land.

#### IV.7.1.3 Yahweh's Love for Israel

##### 3:1

And Yahweh said to me again, 'Go, love (אהב) a woman who loves a partner and is an adulteress; even as Yahweh loves (באהבת) the people of Israel, though they turn to other gods and love cakes and raisins'.

The character of the love of Yahweh for Israel is described by the first and third use of אהב: Hosea is to love (אהב) an adulterous woman who loves a partner. The third use of אהב interprets the meaning of Hosea's love for the woman. The act of Hosea's love for the unfaithful woman therefore

reflects the model for Yahweh's own love for his people.

The fourfold use of the verb **בָּהֲנָה** in v1 is stylistically parallel to the four occurrences of the root **הָנָה** 'to commit harlotry' in 1:2. The repetition of **הָנָה** in 1:2 lays stress on how serious Israel's spiritual adultery is. In contrast, the repetition of **בָּהֲנָה** in 3:1 serves to contrast the love of Yahweh for Israel, represented by the love of Hosea for the adulterous woman, with her faithless love toward him in following her lovers, the Baals, forsaking him, her real husband. It also stresses the amazing endurance of the love of Yahweh for Israel in spite of her constant unfaithful love to him.

#### 9:15

All their evil is in Gilgal;  
indeed there I came to hate them.  
Because of the wickedness of their deeds  
I will drive them out of my house.  
I will no more love (**אֶהְבֶּתֶם**) them;  
all their princes are rebels.

As described in 9:10 above, Hos 9:10–17 announce Yahweh's punishment of the Israel contemporary to Hosea through the review of the guilt of Israel's ancestors which occurred at Baal-peor (v10) and Gilgal (v15). The corrupt history of Israel's fathers has been thoroughly imprinted on the following present Israel of Hosea.

In v15a, 'every evil of theirs in Gilgal' can be summarised in two points: the one connected with Israel's monarchy, the other with her cultic life. On the one hand, the beginning of Israel's kingship under Saul is connected with the name of Gilgal (cf. 1 Sam 11:15; 15:12, 21). Hosea regarded Israel's monarchy



as one of her primary guilty actions against Yahweh (3:4; 7:3-7; 8:4; 9:15; 10:3, 7, 15; 13:10). On the other hand, Hosea mentions 'Gilgal' elsewhere twice in Hosea, in 4:15; 12:12[11]. In 4:15, Hosea, like Amos (4:4; 5:5), warned Israel not to go to Gilgal, and attacked her wrong cultic life in Gilgal, since there Israel worshipped Yahweh as though he were the Baal of the land, as she did in Baal-peor (v10). In the light of the wider context, the guilt of Israel in Gilgal in v15 seems to be more concerned with her cultic life than that of her monarchy. In this sense, 'their princes' (שְׂרִירָהֶם) in v15bβ may refer to Israel as a whole (cf. A/F 545) rather than her political leaders. Yahweh reacts to Israel's worship of Yahweh as Baal: 'there he began to hate (שָׂנֵא) them', as a husband hates his faithless wife. The term שָׂנֵא is used as a formal term in the legal setting of divorce (cf. Dt 22:13, 16; 24:3; Jer 12:8); and it is employed only in Hosea here, which indicates Yahweh's strong hostility to the broken marital relationship. So, Yahweh drives out (שָׁרַף) them from his house, bringing the marriage to an end. As a result, Yahweh declares: 'I will love them no more' (לֹא אוֹסֵף), since they did not respond to his persistent love for them in spite of their perverse love for Baals. Their history, with its pleasant commencement, is now approaching a terrible termination.

### 11:1

When Israel was a child, I loved him (וְאֶהְבֵּתִי);  
from Egypt I called my son.

After the account of frustrated marital love (Hos 1-3), we now have that of refused paternal love: Hos 11 describe the form of the relationship between Yahweh and Israel as the love between father and son, and view the

ingratitude of Israel in the face of his fatherly love in the manner of the child ungrateful for all the love she has received from Yahweh.

At the very beginning of her history, Israel was called נער (cf. 'young man' (Jer 1:6f.)). Here a significant event for the young Israel was that Yahweh loved him (וואהבהו) (v1a). The term אהב in this context denotes an intimate relationship of deep affection, care, nurture, protection, guidance, and obedience.<sup>1</sup> In v1b ('and out of Egypt I called my son'), Hosea describes the Exodus as the beginning of the history of Israel, since Yahweh not only delivered Israel from Egypt but also called (קראתי) Israel as his son. The verb קרא (v1b) is parallel to אהב (v1a), each complementing the meaning of the other: Yahweh's love for Israel has a close relationship with his election of Israel. The love of Yahweh hence caused him to choose Israel and to have Israel as his son. So, Hosea is the first to use the term אהב to interpret Yahweh's relationship to Israel,<sup>2</sup> while Amos uses the term ידע 'to know' or 'to acknowledge' to denote the relationship between Yahweh and Israel ('You only have I known of all the families of the earth' (3:2a)). Hosea's theme of Yahweh's love as the motive of his choosing Israel to be his son is produced in detail in Dt 4:37; 7:7-9; 10:15.

#### 11:4

I led them with human cords<sup>3</sup>  
with bonds of love (אהבה),  
and I was to them like those  
who ease the yoke on their cheeks,  
and I bent down to him to feed (him).

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<sup>1</sup> Cf. vv3-4; Wolff (1974:198).

<sup>2</sup> Cf. also 'the bands of love'; Wolff (1974:197); and Mays (1969:153).

<sup>3</sup> Lit. cords of man (אדם); cf. LXX (δεσμοις αγαπησεως μου).



The interpretation of the image of v4 seems to depend on the issue: whether the metaphor of father and son continues in v4 or whether there is a shift to the metaphor of the unyoked animal of burden. A key to solve the problem may depend on the reading of the consonants **לַי** in the MT: whether **לַי** 'yoke' (MT) or **לַי** 'child' (e.g. Wolff; Mays). As for the latter reading, we feel a difficulty in accepting it, since 1) in their rendering: 'and I was to them as those who lift a small child to their cheek', there is a problem in number, as A/F (581) noted, because we would expect one person lifting an infant to 'his' cheek; and 2) Hosea uses a simile picturing Israel as a stubborn cow (4:16); he compares a young heifer harrassed for plowing to Israel's vocation (10:11). Therefore, if we read **לַי** 'yoke' in the MT, we may interpret v4 as follows: the metaphor of Yahweh's love for Israel shifted to a helpless animal: just as Yahweh called, and taught the child to walk, taking care of the child by the arms (vv1, 3a), the owner draws the animal with kindness and affection: with cords of compassion (**חַסְדִּים**) and bands of love (**חַבְלֵי אֶהָבָה**); just as Yahweh eased the child's trouble by healing it (v3b), the master makes the animal comfortable by lifting the yoke (**לַי**). In the Old Testament, the term **לַי** is a symbol of servitude or oppression (Dt 28:48; cf. 1 Kgs 12:4-14), hence its removal is a symbol of liberation (Gen 27:40; Lev 26:13). Israel's freedom from her oppression under Pharaoh in Egypt is like the removal of the yoke from the shoulders of a beast. In this connection, v4c ('and I bent down to him to feed (him)') probably signifies Yahweh's continual presence with Israel, protecting and feeding her in the wilderness (cf. 2:10, 16[8, 14]; 13:5-6), as the master bends down to feed the animal.

In summary, **חַסְדִּים** in v4, used within the metaphor of a beast of burden and



its master, and suggesting the Exodus and wilderness, demonstrates Yahweh's compelling affection and condescension for Israel.

#### IV.7.2 אָהַב in Hosea 12-14

##### IV.7.2.1 Israel's Love of Persons or Things Opposed to Yahweh

###### 12:8

Canaan, in his hands are false scales.  
He loves (אָהַב) to oppress.

In Hos 12:8-9[7-8], Hosea condemns the unjust wealth of his contemporary Ephraim like Canaan in terms of commercial matters. Verse 8 describes Ephraim as a Canaanite trader holding false scales. Thus, he is the one who loves (אָהַב) to oppress others for profit. The term אָהַב in this context may be used to mean 'to desire eagerly' for wealth. The word עָשָׂק 'to oppress' occurs twice in Hosea in 5:11; 12:8. In 5:11a, it is used in the context of Yahweh's punishment in passive participle form: 'Ephraim is oppressed (עָשׂוּק), crushed in judgment, because he was determined to go after vanity'. Here, however, the verb is used to reveal Ephraim's crime of oppressing neighbours, especially the poor and the needy (cf. Am 3:9; 4:1). Hence, 'he loves to oppress' in Hos 12:8 signifies in part that the present Ephraim of Hosea oppressed the weak people by force. The term אָהַב is thus used to help portray Ephraim's desire to collect wealth by taking illegal measures in their commercial life. As a result, their right relationship with their neighbour is to be broken. Rather Yahweh commands: 'You shall love your neighbour as yourself' (וְאָהַבְתָּ לְרֵעֶךָ כְּמוֹךָ) (Lev 19:18b): to have a right

relationship with your neighbour. In this sense, the term **בְּחֶסֶד** in 12:8 is employed to denote a relationship between humans.

#### IV.7.2.2 Yahweh's Love for Israel

##### 14:5

I will heal their turning,  
I will love them (**אֶהֱבֵם**) freely.  
For my anger has turned from him.

Hos 14:5-9[4-8] is regarded as Yahweh's promise to respond to Israel's prayer of repentance (vv2-4[1-3]). In v5, Yahweh promises to heal (**רָפָא**) the apostasy (**מִשׁוּבָתָם**) of the Israel who returns to him. In Hosea, the word **מִשׁוּבָתָם** characterises Israel's rebellion from Yahweh and stubbornness in not returning to him (cf. 11:7), while the term **רָפָא** is used in the context of restoration (cf. 5:13; 6:1; 7:1; 11:3). Therefore, here Yahweh as a physician is ready to heal the sickness of Israel's 'apostasy', when she recognises her illness and returns to him. As discussed earlier in the structural analysis of v5, v5a $\beta$  describes how Yahweh's healing ministry came from his free love (**אֶהֱבֵם** 'I will love <sup>them</sup> freely'), which at the same time caused him to appease his anger (**חָנָן**; cf. 8:5; 11:9; 13:11). In this context, **בְּחֶסֶד** in v5 means not only sentimental affection, but also faithfulness to the relationship between Yahweh and Israel,<sup>1</sup> since 1) Israel's penitential prayer (vv2-4) is followed by Yahweh's promise to heal her turning from his love (v5ff.), which signifies that Yahweh is loyal to the relationship with Israel; 2) **נָדָבָה** ('freely') denotes 'free inclination, voluntary gift, free-will offering'

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<sup>1</sup> Cf. Stuart (1987:214-215).

(Cf. Holladay (1978:228)); so Yahweh's love for Israel resulted from his free will, but the will is to be effective on her return to him. In this connection, Yahweh's free love in v5 is in part used to try to win her eager affection towards him; he on his part is ready to heal her apostasy willingly, demonstrating his enduring love for her.

#### IV.7.3 The Relationship of the Use of אָהַב in 12-14 to that in 1-11

Our discussion now turns to examine how the key word אָהַב in 14:5[4], in the light of its usage in the rest of the book, functions to carry a major theme in Hosea as a whole.

The root אָהַב occurs nineteen times in Hosea, and is used in two ways: on the one hand, Israel's love for someone or something opposed to Yahweh, and on the other, Yahweh's love for Israel. Hosea used אָהַב thirteen times to describe Israel's love. In only one instance the term is used to express her early willing mind (10:11), while the remaining twelve uses are employed to depict her perverse love of that which opposes to Yahweh. The use of the root אָהַב as her wrong love can be grouped in three categories:

1. Cult (x10): to love the Baals of the fertility rite: Israel went after her lovers (מֵאֲהָבִיהָ 2:7, 9, 12, 14, 15 [5, 7, 10, 12, 13]); she loved a partner (3:1), cakes of raisins (3:1), shame (4:18), a harlot's hire (9:1), and a detestable thing (9:10).
2. Politics (x1): Israel relied on her political allies, Assyria and Egypt (אֲהָבִים 'lovers' in 8:9).
3. Economics (x1): Israel loved to oppress her neighbour for profit (12:8[7]).

Therefore, Hosea used the root אָהַב in almost two thirds of the cases (twelve instances out of nineteen in Hosea) to describe Israel's love of Baal,



her adultery; and this was already anticipated in the fourfold use of **הָנִיף** 'to commit harlotry' in 1:2.

In contrast, Hosea used the root **אָהַב** six times in a positive sense to denote Yahweh's love for Israel, which motivates him to punish Israel (9:15) and to save her (3:1 (x2); 11:1, 4; 14:5[4]).

Hosea's use of **אָהַב** twelve times as Israel's love for Baals and six times as Yahweh's love for Israel demonstrates how serious Israel's illness of Baal worship is, and at the same time emphasises Yahweh's enduring love for her in spite of no response from her to his love. This is manifest, since Hosea never used **אָהַב** to describe Israel's love for Yahweh.

The sixfold use of **אָהַב** in the context of salvation may be summed up as follows: the term in 3:1 (x2) is used to express the love of Yahweh for Israel as that of a husband for his wife, while the term in 11:1, 4 signifies his love for her as that of a father for his son. Therefore, Hosea's use of **אָהַב** to describe Yahweh's love for Israel, once and only once within 12-14, in 14:5 serves to emphasize that despite no answer from her to his love towards her, he persistently woos her and exhorts her to return to him by his love (cf. 2:16[14]). This is characterized in terms of the loving attitude of a husband for his wife and of a father for his son. The free love of Yahweh for Israel in 14:5[4] can hence be regarded as his love for her by his every loving way.

Hosea was the first to use **אָהַב** to state the relationship of Yahweh with

Israel; and only Hosea depicted unfaithful Israel as 'loving' other gods.<sup>2</sup> Hence, Hosea's attempts to introduce love as the basis of Yahweh's relationship to Israel, using the image of his own marriage life, should be seen as something shockingly fresh to contemporary Israel. Amos, Isaiah, and Micah, fellow prophets of Hosea, do not mention the 'love of Yahweh' at all.

Hosea may have endeavoured to instruct Israel on the intimate relationship between Yahweh and Israel, in the context of her love for Baals, by the employment of אהב rather than ברית and חסר, although the latter two terms<sup>3</sup> may have had influence on Hosea's idea of a marital bond between Yahweh and Israel. This may be why Hosea used אהב so favourably, and in particular, so enthusiastically and emphatically in 14:5, since Yahweh is the God who should love to have an intimate relationship with his people. The command to Israel, 'love Yahweh' in Dt 6:4,<sup>4</sup> is, therefore, to be regarded as a proper and natural response from her to his 'free love' for her in Hos 14:5.

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<sup>2</sup> Cf. Mays (1969:153); A/F (542).

<sup>3</sup> Cf. ברית in 2:20[18]; 6:7; 8:1; 10:4; 12:2[1]; חסר in 2:21[19]; 4:1; 6:4, 6; 10:12; 12:7[6].

<sup>4</sup> Cf. Mt 22:37; Mk 12:30; and Lk 10:27.

## V CONCLUSIONS

### V.1 The Thematic Unity of Hosea 12-14

As noted at the very beginning of ch IV, Muilenburg (1969:16-17) points out that one of the functions of key words positioned at important places of constituent literary units is to lead one to their motifs. In this connection, the purpose of this section is to demonstrate the thematic unity of Hos 12-14 through discussion of the role played by the key words and their motifs, noted above; the earlier treatment of the key words shows a structured development of major themes in Hos 12-14. In the light of analyses of the key words in relation to their contexts, they fall into two major categories:

1. Judgment (12:1-14:1): מרמה 'falsehood'; שוב (hiph) 'to return/repay'; אשם 'to become guilty/punishable'; מות 'to die'; ידע 'to know'; בקע 'to tear open'.
2. Salvation (14:2-9): שוב (qal) 'to return'; אהב 'to love'.

#### V.1.1 The Key Terms of Judgment (12:1-14:1)

The term מרמה 'falsehood' in 12:1[11:12] ('Ephraim has surrounded me with deceit, the house of Israel with falsehood (ובמרמה)') accuses Israel of deceiving Yahweh. The term in 12:8[7]a ('Canaan, in his hands are false (מרמה) scales') describes a major crime leading to the punishment of Israel: they deceived their neighbour for profit. This indicates a perverse relationship between people. The falsehood of Israel shows that she has broken her relationship with Yahweh (v1), leading to wayward relationships between people (v8). The falsehood of Israel to both Yahweh (12:1) and



humans (v8) thus gives bitter (תַּמְרוּרִים) provocation to Yahweh, who, according to the evil deeds of Israel, should therefore repay (יָשִׁיב) her likewise (vv3, 15).

The term שׁוּב in the hiph 'to return/repay' occurs only twice in Hosea, in 12:3, 15[2, 14] in the context of judgment. Verse 3 begins with the lawsuit (רִיב) of Yahweh as plaintiff against Israel. The purpose of the suit against Jacob expressed in terms of a review of his career is that contemporary Israel will receive an appropriate punishment ('according to his deeds he will repay (יָשִׁיב) him'). The recurrence of the term in v15bβ ('his LORD will return (יָשִׁיב) to him his reproach') serves to confirm that his LORD (אֲדֹנָיו) as judge will certainly punish Israel.

The root נָשָׂא 'to become guilty/punishable' occurs twice in Hos 12-14, in 13:1; 14:1, serving the sub-section 13:1-14:1. The employment of the term in 13:1b ('But he became guilty (וַיִּנָּשֵׂא) through Baal and died') reveals the cause of Israel's guilt: Baal worship. The recurrence of the term in 14:1a ('Samaria shall suffer for her guilt (נָשָׂא), for she has rebelled against her God') emphasises that as a consequence of her perverse relation with him, her rebellious idolatry of Baal, she should pay for her guilt. In this sense, the use of נָשָׂא in 14:1 is relevant to שׁוּב (hiph) 'to return/repay' in 12:3, 15.

The root מוּת 'to die' occurs three times in Hos 12-14, in 13:1, 14 (x2). The term in 13:1b ('But he became guilty through Baal and died (וַיָּמָת)') states the effect of Ephraim's being guilty of Baal worship: death. The recurrences of the term in v14aβ, bα ('Shall I redeem them from death (מִמָּוֶת)? Where are your plagues, O Death (מוּת)?') are used to emphasise that, although Yahweh

is the God who redeemed (לָאֵל) Israel from the land of Egypt, and is still able to rescue them from death, which is in his power, death will be their inevitable fate: the compassion of Yahweh is not effective in the broken relationship between Israel and himself.

The root יָדָע 'to know' occurs only once in 12:1-14:9, in 13:4 out of nineteen total appearances in Hosea. The term in 13:4 ('I am Yahweh your God from the land of Egypt. You should not know (לֹא יָדָעוּ) any God except me; for there is no saviour except me') is used to demand that Israel have a proper knowledge of Yahweh, the God of the Exodus; in this context, the term יָדָע implies that Israel should have relations with Yahweh exclusively, as she had in the time of Exodus. Although the term יָדָע occurs only one time in Hos 12:1-14:9, in 13:4, its employment is significant: it has a double function: 1) Yahweh had a relationship with Israel from the days of the Exodus. As a response, she should have a relationship with him alone, as she had in the time of Exodus. 2) The following v6, however, highlights the rebellion of Israel against Yahweh's demand for her sole knowledge of him alone in v4: having satisfied her appetite, she forgot (שָׁכַח) Yahweh, following her lovers, Baals (cf. 2:15[13]). The use of יָדָע in 13:4 and the contrasting term שָׁכַח in 13:6 thus highlight a fundamental cause of the guilt of Israel: Yahweh commanded Israel to acknowledge him alone, and to have a relationship with him exclusively. If they fail to follow the command, forgetting him, and breaking the relationship, then punishment is to be anticipated, as in the immediately following vv7ff.

The term בָּקַע 'to tear open' appears only twice in Hosea, in 13:8; 14:1[13:16]. The term in 13:8bβ ('Wild beasts shall tear them open (תִּבְקַעֵם)') is used, in



the image of Yahweh as brutal beasts, to stress the severity of Yahweh's punishment for Israel's guilt in forgetting (שכח) him (v6). The recurrence of the term in 14:1bβ ('Their pregnant women shall be torn open (יבקעו) is employed to threaten Samaria in a terrible vision: even pregnant women, an image of the most vulnerable, shall be slaughtered brutally. The repetition of בקע in 13:8; 14:1 thus demonstrates the violence of Yahweh's punishment of Israel's guilt (v1); she forgot Yahweh and his command of having a relationship with him alone (vv4-6).

These key terms in the context of judgment (12:1[11:12]-14:1[13:16]) all serve to give an account of the cause of the guilt and its repercussions in the judgment upon Israel: Yahweh demanded that Israel know (יָדַע) and acknowledge him only: that she have a relationship with him exclusively, since he is the God of the Exodus, the sole saviour of Israel. However, since they came into Canaan, they forgot Yahweh through involvement in the Baal fertility cult of Canaanite religion. Their lack of knowledge of Yahweh, breaking the relationship to him, led them to deceit (מַרְמָה) towards Yahweh (12:1) and their neighbour (12:8); and to incur guilt (אָשָׁם) (13:1). As a result, their guilt is to be returned (יָשִׁיב) to them (12:3, 15); to be punishable (אָשָׁם) (14:1[13:16]) by total destruction through being torn open (בָּקַע) (13:8; 14:1), or simply death (מוֹת) (13:1, 14). Therefore, these terms, in the context of judgment, all serve to lay stress on the cause of the violent judgment and its consequences.

#### V.1.2 The Key Terms of Salvation (14:2-9)

In contrast, the two key terms of שׁוּב in the qal 'to return' and אָחַז in the



context of salvation (14:2-9[1-8]) serve, in the midst of the apostasy of Israel and her impending destruction, to describe a relationship between Yahweh and Israel in a positive sense:

The root **שׁוּב** appears five times in 14:2-9[1-8], in vv2, 3, 5 (x2), 8. The use of the term at the very beginning of the prophetic exhortation in the context of salvation in v2aα ('Return (**שׁוּבָה**), Israel, to Yahweh your God') demonstrates the persistent desire of Yahweh for Israel's return to Yahweh her God, since there is no other way for the stumbling Israel to be saved from catastrophe. The phrase **יְהוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ** 'Yahweh your God' occurs three times in Hosea in Yahweh's self-introductory sentence, 'I am *Yahweh your God* from the land of Egypt' (12:10[9]a; 13:4a) and here. That means Israel should return to Yahweh, the God of the Exodus and wilderness (cf. 13:5). Thus, in this context, **שׁוּב** in 14:2 denotes that Israel who has continually taken part in the religion of the Canaanite cult of Baal worship, should turn away from that god, and return to the religion of the Exodus and wilderness. She is to enter into her original relationship with him.

The repetition of the term in v3a ('Take words with you, return (**וּשְׁבוּ**) to Yahweh') serves not only to stress Yahweh's enthusiasm for Israel's return but also to show that the sole condition for return is words of repentance and obedience, illustrated in the following prayer of true penitence (vv3b-4), (contrasting the previous superficial song in 6:1-3). So, as in v2aα, the term **שׁוּב** in v3a is employed in the sense of return to the original relationship between Yahweh and Israel.

The twofold use of the root **שׁוּב** in v5[4] in Yahweh's promise of Israel's

restoration (vv5-9[4-8]) in response to her repentant prayer (vv3-4[2-3]), may also be viewed in terms of the relationship of Yahweh with Israel: in v5aα ('I will heal their apostasy (משׁוּבָתָם)), the term משׁוּבָתָם means literally 'their turning away from (Yahweh)'. Thus, at the very beginning of his response to their prayer, Yahweh's promise to heal Israel emphasises his intention of restoring the previous relationship with her, as it was before.

The root שׁוּב in v5b ('for my anger has turned (שׁוּב) from him') is also used in relation to the preceding משׁוּבָתָם 'their apostasy': the statement of Yahweh declares that his anger, directed at uncovering their guilt and at punishing them, is to cease in order that the apostasy may be healed. As a result, Israel will no longer remain in fear of this guilt. Its forgiveness will allow her to live in peace; in a renewed relationship with Yahweh, as in her original history.

The final employment of the term in v8[7]aα ('They shall return (יָשׁוּבוּ) and dwell in his shadow') may also be considered in terms of relationship of Yahweh with Israel. Here their return in the context of Yahweh's response to sincere repentance is not to be regarded as a superficial return to him. It is a matter of their true movement toward him in order that they may recover their original relationship. As a result of their faithful return, Yahweh promises an abundant future life for Israel in the remaining vv8aβ-9.

In short, after the employment of the word שׁוּב once in the context of judgment in Hos 12:1[11:12]-14:1[13:16], in 12:7 in the sense of repentance, its appearance five times in the context of salvation in 14:2-9 [1-8], in 14:2, 3, 5 (x2), 8 is significant in terms of relationship: the fivefold use of the



term lays stress on the fact that the unique hope for the future life of Israel lies in return to Yahweh, the God of the Exodus and wilderness. Since the wrong relationship of Israel with Yahweh has led to her destruction, she is to return to him in repentance and obedience, in order that she may recover her earlier relationship.

In a similar manner, the occurrence of the term אהב 'to love' only once in 14:2-9[1-8], in 14:5 ('I will love them (אהבם) freely') may also be understood in terms of the relationship between Yahweh and Israel:

As discussed above on אהב in 14:5[4], v5 states that the free love of Yahweh had led him to heal the sickness of Israel's apostasy (משובתם), and at the same time caused his anger to turn (שב) from her. In this context, just as both משובתם and שב are used in terms of a relationship of Israel with Yahweh, so the term אהב is also employed to denote the relationship, as in 11:4 ('the bands of love'): the term here means not only the emotional affection of Yahweh for Israel, but also the faithfulness of Yahweh to his relationship with her. The free love of Yahweh in healing the apostasy (משובתם) of Israel, and turning (שב) his anger from her is to be regarded not only as the source of his invitation for her to return (twice (vv2-3a)) but also as that of his faithful response to this return (vv3b-4). The effect of the love of Yahweh, in the return of Israel to a restored relationship with him, is thus stated in terms of the prevailing metaphor: Israel as a plant shall flourish and bear fruit luxuriantly (vv6-9). Therefore, after the use of the term אהב in 12:8[7] in a negative context, its only other employment within Hos 12-14, in 14:5, is important: the term אהב serves not only to set the whole sub-section 14:2-9 into the context of salvation but also lays



stress on the powerful love of Yahweh, love aiming for a renewed relationship, and a prosperous new life for Israel.

In the light of the discussion above, the use of the key terms in Hos 12-14 may be summarised as follows:

The key terms מרמה 'falsehood', שוב (hiph) 'to return/repay', אשם 'to become guilty/punishable', בקע 'to tear open', מות 'to die', and ידע 'to know' in the judgment context of 12:1-14:1 are used to state the cause and effect of the perverse relationship between Yahweh and Israel: the term ידע in 13:4 serves to emphasise that Israel should know Yahweh exclusively, the God of the Exodus, i.e., she should acknowledge him and relate to him alone. But in v6, the term שכח 'to forget' witnesses to the ignorance, or even denial of Yahweh and his command, by an Israel following her lovers, Baals (cf. 2:15[13]). The evil deeds of Israel led her to break her relationship with Yahweh. The terms מרמה (12:1, 8; cf. 12:15) and אשם (13:1; 14:1) are employed to denote her guilt as a result of the wrong relationship. As a consequence, שוב (hiph) (12:3, 15), מות (13:1, 14 (x2)), and בקע (13:8; 14:1) emphasise the increasingly severe punishment by Yahweh, culminating in the utter destruction brought by death.

On the other hand, the key terms שוב (qal) 'to return' and אהב 'to love' in the context of salvation in 14:2-9[1-8] lay stress on the motive and results of a renewed relationship between Yahweh and Israel: the invitation of Yahweh for Israel, guilty of a perverse relationship, to 'return' to him (vv2, 3), has originated in his 'free love': the act of his constant faithfulness to his people, causing him to heal their 'apostasy' and to 'turn' his anger from

them (v5). As a consequence, in a restored relationship with Yahweh, Israel is promised a thriving future (vv6-9). The concentration of the use of the key words שׁוֹב and נָחַם in 14:2-9[1-8] in order to emphasise the persistent desire and enthusiasm of Yahweh for the salvation of Israel in a new relationship, may explain why יָדַע 'to know', another key word expressive of the relationship in Hosea, recurs in such a positive sense in the final verse 10aβ ('Whoever is intelligent, let him know them (וִירְעֵם)').

## V.2 Concluding Observations

V.2.1 Attempts to discern the structure of the book of Hosea, especially of the latter part of the book, have previously regarded this as a difficult if not an impossible task. My major concern in my present work has been to analyse in detail from the point of view of rhetorical criticism the structure of the final form of Hos 12-14 in order to interpret its meaning more fully.

In ch I, for the purpose of testing possible ways of solving various problems of the book of Hosea, I have reviewed the major literature on the book of Hosea since Ewald (1875) in chronological order. As a result, I have suggested the following two methods, for the present study of Hos 12-14, 1) textual criticism; and 2) structural criticism. Hence, in the main section of ch II, I have presented an extensive discussion of the text of Hos 12-14, in which I have suggested solutions to the most problematic passages, for example, רַעְתִּיר for יִרְעֵתִיר (13:5); פָּרִים for פְּרִים (14:3). Finally, as a result and summary of these analyses, I have offered my own fresh translation of Hos 12-14.



On the basis of the textual criticism of Hos 12-14, I have discussed in detail, in ch III, the structure of Hos 12-14 by application of the devices of rhetorical criticism. By identifying the structure of Hos 12-14, we have been able to suggest that Hos 12-14 is a literary unity; and that the section has three large sub-sections: 12:1-15; 13:1-14:1; 14:2-9. Among the devices of rhetorical criticism, in particular, the feature of repetition has played a significant role within larger structures as well as smaller ones. On the one hand, I have argued that the employment of אפרים in 12:1[11:12] and 14:9[8] forms an inclusion, serving to mark the literary unity of the section Hos 12-14. On the other, such structural patterns as antitheses (12:4-14) as well as varieties of envelope patterns (13:1-14:1) and alternation between speakers (14:2-9) have helped to shape the three large sub-sections. From the analysis of the structure of Hos 12-14, I have discerned that the following are the key words: on the one hand, the key terms in the context of judgment in 12:1[11:12]-14:1[13:16], מרמה 'falsehood'; שוב (hiph) 'to return/repay'; אשם 'to become guilty/punishable'; מות 'to die'; ידע 'to know'; and בקע 'to tear open'; and on the other, those of salvation in 14:2-9[1-8], שוב (qal) 'to return'; and אהב 'to love'.

In ch IV, the exegetical study of the key terms of Hos 12-14 in the whole context of the book of Hosea has led me to conclude that the key terms of Hos 12-14 have illustrated the thematic movement of the section Hos 12-14 - his judgment of total destruction upon her (12:1-14:1) leads towards her salvation, to a new life in which she flourishes like a plant in full blossom (14:2-9). The purpose of Yahweh in the violent chastisements and judgment



of Israel is to bring about her return, and her participation in the promises of salvation when she will possess and enjoy an abundant future life, empowered of his free love. The description of the relationship of Yahweh to Israel by an interplay between the themes of judgment and salvation in the major structure of Hos 12-14 offers one of the most dramatic and emphatic contrasts in the Old Testament. In the light of the structural overview above, it can be concluded that Hosea is a prophet declaring both judgment and salvation - one can see good examples of both judgment (12:1-14:1) and salvation (14:2-9) in this section of the book. This thematic movement from words of judgment to promises of salvation in Hos 12-14 is similar to the basic structure of the two preceding literary parts (chs 1-3; 4-11), and thus shows a continuity in the construction of all the literary units of the book of Hosea. In Hosea, these two elements of judgment and salvation are always closely interrelated. The aim of Yahweh's judgment as a consequence of Israel's unfaithfulness to him is to lead her to acknowledge guilt in order that she may return to him in repentance and obedience, and remain in his love for her alone. In Hosea, Yahweh's judgment serves to bring about Israel's salvation.

V.2.2 In connection with the close interrelationship of judgment and salvation in Hosea, we can comment on the treatment of the salvation oracles in Hosea within Old Testament scholarship as follows:

We should admit that past Old Testament studies have been greatly indebted to both literary historical (source) criticism and form criticism. These two

methods have pursued the pre-history behind the final form of the texts by probing their historical situation and typical forms. In the case of Hosea, although the form, date and place of his oracles can seldom be clearly identified, both types of research have often maintained that the sayings of judgment and salvation are contradictory to each other – these two elements cannot be harmonised in the oracles and contexts of Hosea. So, both methods have tended to treat Hosea as entirely a prophet of judgment; and hold that the sayings of salvation in Hosea came from different hands, reflecting the situation of later age – in fact (post) exilic times. Therefore, it has long been felt by scholars<sup>1</sup> that the salvation oracles in Hosea are secondary additions. As a result, these two principles have often resulted in eliminating one of the double aspects (judgment and salvation) present in the book.

On the other hand, our present work on the text and structure of the final form of Hos 12-14 has helped, by applying rhetorical criticism to the text, to uncover that the present text of Hos 12-14 was not simply collected by chance from various elements of tradition. Rather the text had always clearly and dramatically witnessed the double aspects of the proper reality of Yahweh: judgment through justice and salvation through love.<sup>2</sup> Yahweh exercises his justified wrath at the rebellion of his people. However, the

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<sup>1</sup> For instance, Cheyne (1895:xix); Wellhausen (1898:20); Marti (1904:8-10); Harper (1905a:clixff.); Duhm (1912:114-115); Stinespring (1974:133ff.); cf. Yee (1987:310, 315-317); and the earlier discussion on Groves (1987:179-191); A/F (71-76).

<sup>2</sup> Cf. Ex 20:5-6; 33:19; 34:6-7; Mi 7:18-20; A/F 263.



grace, mercy and love of Yahweh will ultimately overcome his anger on them by forgiving their iniquity, since Yahweh loves his people freely (cf. Hos 14:5[4]). It can thus be claimed that our work on Hos 12-14 by way of rhetorical criticism has contributed to an understanding that the element of salvation came from Hosea just as that of judgment did. Both literary historical criticism and form criticism have often failed to observe this fully, and hence failed to interpret the relationship of these two elements as both originating in Yahweh's own attributes.<sup>3</sup>

V.2.3 We will now examine the question of the date of the composition of the final form of Hosea [4-]12-14. The process by which the oracles uttered by Hosea reached the present written form of Hos [4-]12-14 is in fact impossible to reconstruct. Although this problem is not a major concern of this present work, and it is difficult to determine when the initial composition of Hosea's oracles may have happened, we may suggest, in the light of our structural analysis of Hos [4-]12-14 as a literary unity, an early date for their composition for the following reasons:

- 1) The desperate situation of the last years of the catastrophe around 721 B.C. may have hastened the work of the composition of Hosea's oracles in the lifetime of Hosea, in order that they might be preserved for the future

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<sup>3</sup> Cf. also Clements (1975b:420-423; 1977:55); Childs (1979:380-382); A/F (68-76, 315-316).



out of the destruction of the northern kingdom.<sup>4</sup>

2) Indications of Judean redactional activity are relatively few especially in comparison with Amos. Here, although he recognises the presence of interpolated material at several places, the evaluation of Wolff (1974:xxiii)<sup>5</sup> seems to be appropriate: 'in view of the book's transmission, we are unable to affirm that its every word belongs to the *verba ipsissima* of the prophet. ---. For the most part, however, Hosea's own speech is unmistakable.'

In addition, although the Hebrew Bible and LXX positioned the first six books differently,<sup>6</sup> Hosea is always placed at the first of the Twelve. This may reflect an early date of the composition of Hosea. House (1990:244)<sup>7</sup> notes: 'it is --- possible that the Greek text reflects an early attempt to place the books in some historical order, a task foreign to the logic behind the Hebrew canon.' However, it remains an open question which order of the books in the Twelve is earlier. We have insufficient information about the history of the collecting and ordering of the prophetic books.<sup>8</sup> After the fall of the northern kingdom in 721 B.C., the oracles of Hosea seem to have been transmitted to Judah; and the final form of Hos [4-]12-14 may

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<sup>4</sup> Similarly, Emmerson (1984:166); cf. also Nyberg (1935:18-19); Mays (1969:16); and Wolff (1974:xxxi).

<sup>5</sup> Similarly, Mays (1969:16); Buss (1969:34); Emmerson (1984:166); and Hubbard (1989:33-34).

<sup>6</sup> Cf. the Hebrew Bible: Hosea - Joel - Amos - Obadiah - Jonah - Micah; LXX: Hosea - Amos - Micah - Joel - Obadiah - Jonah.

<sup>7</sup> See below, pp. 340ff. for a fuller mention of House's work.

<sup>8</sup> cf. also Childs (1979:308-309); Carroll (1990:205); Clements (1990:216); and for a discussion on the different placement of Joel in the MT and the LXX, see Wolff (1977:3-4).

have been supplemented and touched up by Judean scribes in the 7th and 6th centuries.<sup>9</sup> Hosea's hopeful oracles on possibilities for Israel's salvation in the future after the judgment of Yahweh would have enhanced the message of those who offered Judah comfort in the Babylonian Exile in the 6th century.

V.2.4 Finally, the joint employment of both textual criticism and structural criticism on the final form of Hos 12-14 should not be restricted to this section, but should be extended to earlier parts of Hosea, and to other books of the Old Testament. In the course of this work, I have been interested in the relationship of structural criticism to textual criticism: a number of seemingly ambiguous and problematic words and passages - a dismaying problem in Hosea studies - have been illuminated by the structural analysis of the text. Hence, applying both principles to Hos 1-3; 4-11 would be a next stage in order to understand the full meaning of Hosea's message.

It was only at the final stage of my work that I was able to read House's recent work (1990)<sup>10</sup> on the unity of the Twelve Minor Prophets. As in my work on Hosea, House too is concerned with the final form of the

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<sup>9</sup> Cf. A/F (52-57); Freedman (1987a:25-26); and for a discussion in depth on Judean elements in the book of Hosea, see Emmerson (1984).

<sup>10</sup> This study is a kind of an extended product of his previous work on Zephaniah (1988), in which after his brief review of the history of the interpretation of Zephaniah, House (1988:20) notes two presuppositions: 1) 'the text itself is valuable aside from its historical background'; and 2) 'the text is a unity.' With these presuppositions, House presents two methodologies ('a wedding of genre criticism and formalism') for the understanding of Zephaniah.



Twelve and with perceiving larger structures within the Twelve, rather than with the pre-history of the text. After his brief review of the history of the interpretation of (the minor) prophets, House (1990:34) suggests a methodological linking of canonical criticism and literary criticism for the study of the unified nature of the Twelve: 'the canonical question of the significance of the ordering of the minor prophets may be answered if proper literary methods are applied to the prophecies.' Hence, House has, by applying both approaches to the final form of the Twelve, attempted to demonstrate the unity of the Twelve through the discussion of genre (37-62), structure (63-109), plot (111-162), characters (163-219), and point of view (221-241). My main interest in House's work concerns his analysis of Hosea within the structure of the Twelve. House (1990:67ff.) maintains that the major themes of the Twelve reflect a tri-partite structure: 1) the sin of Israel and the nations (Hosea - Micah); 2) the punishment of the sin (Nahum - Zephaniah) ; and 3) the restoration of both from that sin (Haggai - Malachi). The first six books are connected neither by history nor by geography, but by the topic of sin (although the books also mention punishment and restoration).

In this wider context, House (1990:73-76) considers the place of Hosea in the structure of the Twelve. Hos 1-3 does double duty as introduction to both Hos 4-14 and the Twelve. Hos 4-14 demonstrates the general attitude of Yahweh toward the sin of Israel: both the threat of punishment and hope of restoration. Put another way, Hosea begins a six-book catalogue of sin (cf. Hos 1-3), and opens the book's treatment of punishment and forgiveness (cf.



Hos 4-14). The remaining books of the Twelve are thematically and structurally connected with each other. For example, House (1990:77-78) observes that Joel, in the MT at least, serves as a bridge between Hosea and Amos. On the one hand, Joel 1-3[2] deals with the sin and restoration of Israel, so supporting Hosea's oracles on Israel's adultery and idolatry. On the other, the description of the sin of Israel's neighbours in Joel's final chapter 4[3] functions as a transition between Joel and Amos, since Am 1:1-2:16 describes world-wide sin. 'In their final canonical form', House (1990:109) assumes, 'these twelve diverse prophecies mesh together as a unit that unfolds the basic tenets of prophecy much more effectively than any single book of the group could alone.' As a result, House (1990:109) maintains that 'the Twelve is a generic and structural unity.'

House (1990:69) does not deny the merits of the analysis of the redactional processes behind the book; but he emphasises that 'the existence of the book in its final form warrants a literary analysis.' In the light of 'the shape of the Twelve and the historical references contained in the text', House (1990:227) has to conclude that the book took its final form 'during post-exilic times, or, more specifically, from 400-300 BC.' If, as a result of House's work, we should see the Twelve as a structured composition, and if the compilers of the Twelve adjusted the text of Hosea to accentuate its usefulness as an introduction, then there may be implications for dating. We may have to concede that Hosea was not completed as early as I suggested above (V.2.3).

As House (1990:109, 243-244) himself has admitted, it cannot be proved that the final compilers of the Twelve did purposely compose the book according to the pattern House has proposed. In this case, his analyses of the Twelve can be regarded as a first stage towards understanding the unity of the Twelve; they need to be complemented by further work, since his approach will not be the only way of looking at the Twelve. However, at the same time his work does make a contribution in observing various aspects of the literary structure of the Twelve through his discussion of the book's genre, structure, plot, characters, and point of view. His study can be said to provide a new way of looking at the question of the unity of the minor prophets. This is a complex problem, and has been given little attention in Old Testament scholarship. However, to explore the unity of the minor prophets in relation to their diversity, and the role of Hosea within this diverse unity, must be the subject of a future contribution to the understanding of the Old Testament.

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